Today's
The Herald-Palladium
included inside

Niles father fights cancer to stand with son on Senior Night
Page B1

Stay Safe
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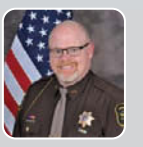
Sheriff, Chuck Heit

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Dowagiac News

Established 1897 • Serving Dowagiac, Sister Lakes and Cassopolis **OCTOBER 25, 2025** leaderpub.com • A publication of The Herald-Palladium **$4**

Dowagiac Union Schools OKs bond refunding

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

DOWAGIAC — Taxpayers in the Dowagiac Union Schools District will save approximately $2.4 million in bond repayment costs as a result of bond refinancing.

The Dowagiac Union Schools Board of Education passed a resolution Monday to authorize the issuance and delegation of the sale of the district's 2026 refunding bonds.

"We're very excited to be able to work through this process," Blomgren said. "[DUS Director of Finance Stacy Ritchie] has been working with our financial team and our auditors to bring this forward and make this happen."

By effectively refinancing the remaining school debt from the 2015 and 2016 bonds – approximately $39 million – the district expects to save taxpayers approximately $2.4 million. The action is expected to accelerate the reduction of the millage level for taxpayers.

"That's a large chunk of change," Blomgren said. "One of the bonds runs through 2031 and the other Bond runs through 2041, so those are the bonds that we currently have in debt. But through the life expectancy of those bonds, by doing this, we can expect a cost savings of $2.4 million to our school-based taxpayers. We're excited about this opportunity.

"It'll drive the millage that we level levee to the taxpayers down quicker, so it's a positive," Ritchie added.

In other business, the board approved three change orders for the high school welding project at a cost of just over $22,000. The changes primarily addressed the facility's ventilation and exhausting system, including the ventilating hoods for the welding equipment and the need for a separate electrical source for each hood. Blomgren said the architectural engineers will pursue "give backs" from the construction company to help manage the increased costs.

The Board also unanimously accepted the results of the 2024-2025 fiscal year audit, which was presented by Tyler Baker. The district is in sound financial shape, as it received an unmodified opinion from Maner Costerisan.

The district's financial statements were found to be in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. The audit did not uncover any significant deficiencies or material weaknesses in internal controls.

DUS was subject to a separate federal compliance audit because it expended over $750,000 in federal funds. The audit focused on the Child Nutrition cluster and found no issues of non-compliance, giving the district a clean opinion on its major programs.

Baker said that the general fund balance showed an increase of approximately $877,000 and as a percentage of total expenditures is approximately 26 percent. The district's total fund balance increased by about $906,000, rising from $9.4 million to $10.3 million.

See **SCHOOLS**, page A4

The write stuff

Cass County commissioner publishes first children's book

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

MASON TOWNSHIP — Every night, RJ Lee and his wife make it a point to read to their children before bed.

After narrating countless stories and tales from different authors, the Cass County District 8 Commissioner decided to create a tale of his own and self-published his first book, "Happy Jack Taekwondo," a book about a little boy named Jack who shows off his experiences doing Taekwondo.

The book – available on Amazon – is loosely based on Lee's oldest son, who practices taekwondo along with Lee's wife, daughter and youngest son.

"I primarily work in agronomy, so that is my main background. However, my family started doing Taekwondo about a year before I went into political office. My wife and all three of my children do Taekwondo, and I provide moral support. The book is loosely based on my oldest son's experience and his teacher when he first started out."

While Lee has written several poems over the years, penning a children's book was a new experience. After watching YouTube videos on the publishing process, he decided to give it a try.

"I was bored one day and started writing," Lee said. "I always hesitated to pursue publishing because the illustrations seemed too difficult."

One of the unique features is the font. Lee used a website to create a font named Sam Sans – named after his wife, Samantha – which is entirely in her handwriting. Lee said the illustrations were created using Midjourney, a generative artificial intelligence program.

"I had to spend hours refining and modifying the images to make them vibrant and attractive for kids," he said.

Lee has shared the book with friends, family and community members and the feedback has been positive.

"The response has been really good; lots of support," he said. "I'm fortunate to have lots of good friends and family in a good community. I've even had quite a few of my farmers buy a copy or two."

Lee added that his most important critics, his children, have enjoyed their father's work.

See **BOOK**, page A6

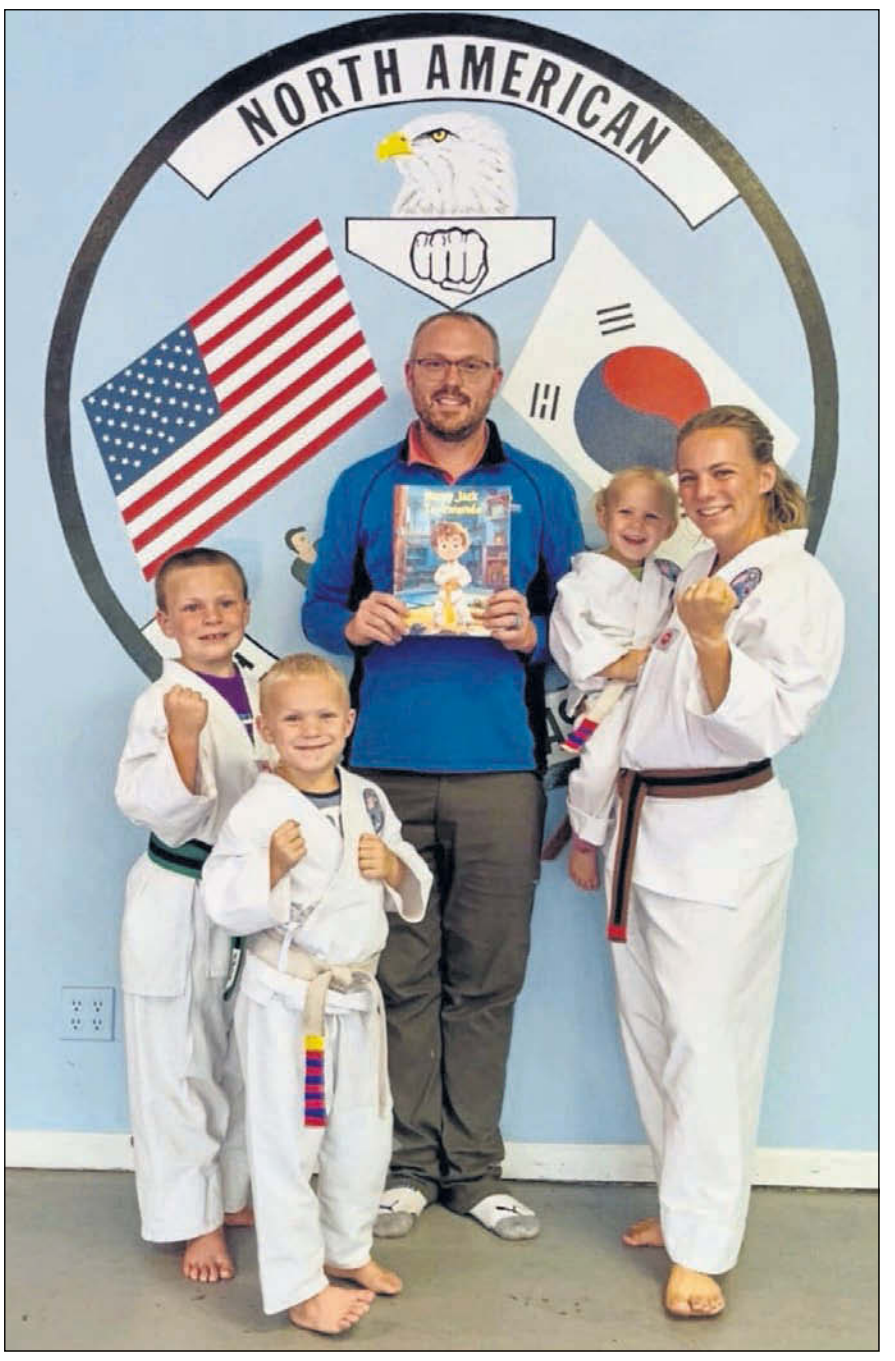

Photo provided
RJ Lee (Center) poses with his family while holding a copy of his book "Happy Jack Taekwondo."

Refugee worker seeks help bringing wife, children to Cassopolis

By JUSTIN FLAGEL
For Leader Publications

CASSOPOLIS — A respected staff member at the Village of Cassopolis is seeking assistance in bringing his wife and children to join him.

Mohammed Hasen works for the Department of Public Works in the village. He is also a legal refugee originally from Sudan, where he faced significant threats, including witnessing the murder of his father and the rape of his mother by the Janjaweed.

After the attacks in Sudan that uprooted his life, he was forced to stay on the move with his family until being stopped and imprisoned. After four years, he escaped and made his way to a refugee camp in Ethiopia.

"It was tough, very difficult," he said, describing life in the camp.

Mohammed began working with the Welcome Corps program in 2016, hoping to find a way to the United States. As foreign policy in the US changed with presidential administrations, though, he found the path closed. He spent years in the camp, going to school, meeting his wife, and having his first child, all while seeking a safer life for his family. The path opened again as US foreign policy shifted once more.

Hasen was connected to Welcome Home, a local group in Cassopolis headed by Ruth Andrews, and was able to come to the United States in 2024. He was hesitant to leave, as his wife and child would not be able to join him, but he intended to follow the procedures to eventually bring them.

The application for his wife and children was in process, but once again, the rules were changed and the Welcome Corps program was put on hold. Mohammed found himself in one part of the world with his wife, first child, and a newborn he hadn't met in the other.

"It's difficult," he said, noting his inability to return to see his family.

Upon arriving in Cassopolis, Hasen was assisted by Welcome Home and members of the Chamber of Commerce in finding an affordable home. Unable to drive, he applied for and received his job with the village, which is within walking distance. Many local residents donated furniture and other items to assist him in setting up his new life.

See **REFUGEE**, page A6

DART celebrates 50 years of service with enhanced buses

Stuff-A-Bus Help the Needy event planned for Oct. 27

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

DOWAGIAC — The City of Dowagiac announced Tuesday that Dowagiac Dial-A-Ride Transit is celebrating its 50th anniversary by upgrading its fleet and partnering with a local grocery store to help those in need.

Dowagiac DART, which launched in 1975, was recently honored with an MDOT Transit Agency Service Award for its 50 years of service to the community. In July 2024, the City entered a new phase of innovation in rural public transportation by launching Dowagiac DART on Demand.

This Uber-like service enables customers to request rides and track status through the Ride Pingo app, while empowering operator Cass County Transit Authority with back-end operations management features.

Now, in 2025, the fleet will be upgraded with three new vehicles, which feature:

- Wider, higher-capacity lifts
- Video displays that will feature pertinent announcements and other information
- Passenger-assist handles on the boarding doors
- All-new design

To further celebrate Dowagiac DART's 50th anniversary, from Monday, October 27, through Friday, October 31, all one-way fares will be $0.50.

The public can preview the new vehicles while helping support neighbors in need. The City of Dowagiac has partnered with local grocery store Family Fare to have the new buses parked in their lots on Monday, October 27, from 8 a.m. until 3 p.m. for Stuff-A-Bus events.

The public is encouraged to contribute non-perishable grocery, health, hygiene, or household items to ideally stuff the buses with donations for ACTION Ministries' pantry. ACTION, which stands for Area Churches Together in One Network, has a team of volunteers that have created and grown a food pantry, senior commodities services, emergency food assistance programs, and other

File photo
Dowagiac Dial-A-Ride Transit is celebrating 50 years of service.

See **DART**, page A6

Today's obituaries • Page A3
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FRANKLY

Tips and quips

What is Frankly? It is where readers sound off on issues of the day. Have a tip or a quip? Call Frankly at 269-687-7702 or email rich.cains@leaderpub.com.

■ No surprise that Donald Trump commuted George Santos prison sentence. There doesn't seem to be a fraudster and pathological liar that he doesn't seem to identify with and feel sorry for. Forget the rest of us just trying to eke out an honest living.

■ I'm not trying to make excuses for drug users, but when a judge knows someone has mental health issues, sending the person to prison is not the answer.

■ George Santos pleaded guilty to stealing identities of family members and election supporters, charging credit cards without authorization, lying about use of campaign contributions and stealing unemployment benefits and Trump pardoned him because he was "horribly mistreated."

■ Deport George Santos!

■ The millage is like an everlasting replenishment fountain. Taxes are already too high. They need to find a better way to get the money. We just gave them a double millage increase a few years ago.

■ I guess I don't understand how someone can say driving while high does not cause driving impairment. You must be high.

■ Smoke lounges are not for me, but if it is your thing, so be it.

■ When Indiana makes it legal, there are going to be a lot of empty buildings in Michigan.

■ Yes, Nobel Peace Prize for man blowing up fishing boats coming from another country sounds about right.

■ Release the Epstein files and be done with it. What's to hide if there is nothing in it?

■ If you aren't watching high school sports, you are really missing some awesome performances. These kids work really hard and give it their all.

Beacon Health System names interim presidents for Allegan, Dowagiac hospitals

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

PIPER

BAILEY

DOWAGIAC — Beacon Health System has announced strategic leadership changes at three of its southwest Michigan hospitals, effective Nov. 1, 2025.

As part of Beacon's commitment to community-focused care, the health system is redesigning the current administrator role and establishing local president roles at its critical access hospitals, Beacon Allegan and Beacon Dowagiac, to strengthen local leadership and enhance service delivery.

Effective November 1, Greg Piper, Vice President of Beacon Retail Services, will serve as Interim President of Beacon Allegan Hospital, and David Bailey, President of Community Hospital of Bremen, will serve as Interim President of Beacon Dowagiac Hospital. Both leaders will continue in their current roles and provide executive oversight for Beacon Plainwell Hospital as the health system implements this new leadership structure.

Paul Hoffman, Administrator for Beacon Allegan, Dowagiac and Plainwell hospitals, will move on from Beacon on October 31, 2025. Paul has provided valuable leadership during the integration of these hospitals into Beacon, and we wish him well in his future endeavors.

Searches for permanent presidents at Beacon Allegan and Beacon Dowagiac will begin immediately.

Beacon is committed to identifying leaders who are deeply invested in their communities and focused on expanding access and services to meet evolving patient needs.

Sticky Spoons Jam to host annual Veteran Makers Market Nov. 9

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

NILES — Sticky Spoons Jam is preparing to host its Veteran Makers Market Sunday, Nov. 9 at 11801 Pucker St., Niles.

The market will run 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., with coffee and lemonade donated and served by Twist & Stout Mobile Bar Experience. At noon, all veterans present will muster for a group photo donated by OnBase Productions.

The market will feature nine small veteran-owned businesses, each bringing their unique craft to the table – from macrame and soap to woodwork, knitted blankets and more. Veterans and active duty service members with ID always receive a 10 percent discount at the Store.

Aiye Akhigbe, the founder and owner of Sticky Spoons Jam, LLC is a Navy veteran. In 2023, she launched the market with a mission to elevate veteran entrepreneurship and create a platform where service, creativity and resilience converge.

Today, her store proudly showcases eight veteran-owned brands, each selected through direct partnership and shared values. By 2027, she aims to grow that number to 15, expanding opportunities for veteran makers whose products reflect lived experience and craftsmanship.

This initiative is more than retail – it's a tribute to the stories behind the goods. Every item on the shelves carries the imprint of a veteran's journey, offering customers a chance to support small businesses while honoring the spirit of service.

"There are over 1.6 million veteran-owned businesses in the United States, representing about 5.5 percent of all U.S. business owners, meaning one in every 18 business owners is a veteran," Akhigbe said. "Our Veteran Makers Market allows us to highlight the veteran entrepreneurial spirit. We welcome the makers to our location and offer the community an opportunity to support small veteran-owned businesses. Come out, grab a cup of coffee or lemonade and some of our in house-made cookies, chat with a veteran and kickstart your holiday shopping."

Photo provided

Sticky Spoons Jam is hosting its annual Veteran Makers Market next month.

Cass County investigates 'suspicious' death in Newberg Township

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

NEWBERG TOWNSHIP — The Cass County Sheriff's Office is investigating a "suspicious" death after a deceased man was found inside a home in Newberg Township Thursday morning.

Deputies, responding to a welfare check at the 11000 block of Born Street, observed a male subject lying on the kitchen floor through a window. After being blocked from entering by several dogs, the Cass County Animal Control was called to the scene to assist in removing the animals.

Upon entering the residence, deputies discovered a female with injuries, who was transported by ambulance to South Bend Memorial Hospital. Deputies then determined that the male subject on the kitchen floor was deceased.

The names of the individuals involved are being withheld pending family notification. The investigation is ongoing.

Deputies were assisted at the scene by the Cass County Drug Enforcement Team, Newberg Ambulance, SEPSA Ambulance, and Cass County Animal Control.

Anyone with information about this incident is asked to call the Cass County Sheriff's Office at 269-445-2481 or the Cass County Tip Line at 1-800-462-9328.

Fernwood to host annual Holiday Market on Nov. 8

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

NILES — Fernwood Botanical Garden is gearing up to host its annual Holiday Market Saturday, Nov. 8.

The event, taking place from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 13988 Range Line Road in Niles, will feature a curated blend of more than 35 local artisans, specialty food vendors and unique plant material growers from across the region.

Fernwood is a 105-acre public garden and nonprofit organization established in 1964. The garden is open year-round Tuesday through Sunday. Admission to the market is free with standard Fernwood admission. Fernwood members will receive special VIP shopping access from 8:30 a.m. to 10 a.m.

The event is a chance to start holiday shopping early, with the Fernwood Gift Shop fully stocked with seasonal items. The Grateful Pie Company at Fernwood will be serving breakfast and lunch selections in the cafe from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.. Visitors can also place orders at the market for custom wreaths made from Fernwood greens and holiday pies from the Grateful Pie Company.

In addition to the market, visitors will have full access to the gardens, preserve trails, and the seasonal pumpkin house. The outdoor Railway Garden will be open for its last weekend of the season.

For a complete list of market vendors, visit fernwoodbotanical.org/holiday-market.

Photo provided

Fernwood Botanical Garden is gearing up to host its annual Holiday Market Saturday, Nov. 8.

WEATHER

Saturday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 55. Calm wind becoming southeast around 5 mph in the afternoon.

Saturday Night: Partly cloudy, with a low around 36. East wind around 5 mph.

Sunday: Mostly sunny, with a high near 57. East wind 5 to 10 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.

Sunday Night: A 20 percent chance of showers after 2am. Partly cloudy, with a low around 37.

Monday: A 20 percent chance of showers before 2pm. Mostly sunny, with a high near 57.

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The Cass County COA has outstanding fitness centers at both locations. Each center offers a variety of cardiovascular fitness machines and weight training equipment as well as In-Person and Zoom Fitness Classes. Trained instructors provide assistance, advice and class instruction to help you meet your fitness goals.

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OBITUARIES

Robert Burkett

October 21, 1935 – October 18, 2025

Robert Eugene Burkett, 89, of Cassopolis, died peacefully Saturday, October 18, 2025 – just three days shy of his 90th birthday – in the comfort of his family's presence. He was finally able to join his beloved wife, Ruth Ann, after missing her immensely, following her passing.

His life began October 21, 1935 in Benton Harbor, Michigan, the first of three children born to Charles and Alice Burkett. He married Ruth Ann Mesko June 30, 1956 in South Bend, Indiana. After sixty-five years of marriage, she preceded him in death in 2021.

Bob was a farmer in Cassopolis for fifty-six years. He owned a livestock trucking business and worked for Michigan Livestock Exchange in Cassopolis. Bob was passionate about draft horses, he invested his time training, pulling and showing his horses. He was a mentor for those in the community, teaching them how to get involved and train their horses. Bob was one of the founding members of the Cass County Draft Horse Association and helped start the draft horse show at the Cass County Fair. He was on the Board of Directors at the Fair for over a decade. Later he got involved with antique tractors, his favorite being his John Deere A. Bob took time every evening to be with his McDonalds friends. Bob enjoyed camping with family and friends, especially by Shipshewana. Most importantly, he loved spending time with his grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Bob will be greatly missed by family and friends. He is survived by two sons, Robert A. (Kim) Burkett of Cassopolis, Rick (Tammy) Burkett of Fair Oaks, Indiana; six grandchildren, Ashley Mesko, Brooks Mesko, Bryan Burkett, Brandy Burkett, Justin Burkett, Matthew Williams; five great grandchildren; one sister, Charlene Allen; and a host of nieces and nephews. In addition to his wife, he was preceded in death by his parents' one step-son, Reginald Mesko and his sister, Patricia Brown.

Private services have taken place. Bob will be laid to rest beside his beloved wife, Ruth Ann, at a later date.

The family prefers contributions in memory of Robert be made to Hanson Hospice Center, give.corewellhealth.org/donate or Cass County Council on Aging, Post Office Box 5, Cassopolis, Michigan 49031.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Wagner Family Funerals Connelly Chapel, Cassopolis. Please share a memory or a message online: wagnercares.com.

Douglas Horstmann

April 8, 1956 – October 17, 2025

Douglas Lee Horstmann, 69, of Cassopolis, died peacefully Friday, October 17, 2025.

His life began April 8, 1956 in South Bend, Indiana the son Roy and Sally Horstmann.

He married Susan Mock on September 19, 1981 in South Bend. She survives.

Doug grew up in Monroeville, Pennsylvania, where he graduated from Gateway High School. He went on to earn his Bachelor of Science degree in electrical engineering from Ohio Institute of Technology. During that time, he spent his summers on Diamond Island with his grandparents. He met his future wife Sue, while operating the island barge. Doug worked for American Electric Power Company for forty-six years, later becoming the Telecom Manager. His department team was his second family. Doug was an avid Notre Dame fan and volunteered as an usher for many years. He enjoyed cheering on the Pittsburgh Pirates, Steelers and Penguins. Doug had a special group of friends that were very cherished and considered family. He loved living and raising his family on Diamond Lake in Cassopolis. Doug was very patriotic and loved his country. He devoted many years to the annual fireworks show and a new barge restoration. Doug was a devoted father and grandpa who cherished every moment he had with them. He supported his children through college and all the activities they were involved in.

Doug will be greatly missed by family and friends. He is survived by his wife of forty-four years, Susan L. Horstmann of Cassopolis; one son, Steven A. (Bryanna) Horstmann of Osceola; two daughters, Michelle D. Horstmann (Matthew Mishler) of Cassopolis, Stacey L. Horstmann-Roth (Jacob Roth) of Edwardsburg; four grandchildren, Kenley Q. Horstmann, Aubree L. Horstmann, Sharlotte L. Roth, Nicholas G. Mishler, his two loving puppies, Dublynn and Flynn. He was preceded in death by his parents, sister, Laura Nedderman, mother-in- law, Beverly Mock and his father-in- law, F. Eugene Mock.

The family will observe a private remembrance. The Horstmann family prefers contributions, in Doug's name, to go to the family for future designation. Check to be written to Susan L. Horstmann.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Wagner Family Funerals Connelly Chapel, Cassopolis. Please share a memory or a message online: wagnercares.com.

Death notices

James "Jim" Hebner, 80, of Niles, passed away on Saturday, October 18, 2025. Arrangements are pending and have been entrusted to Brown Funeral Home & Cremation Services, Niles. www.BrownFuneralHomeNiles.com.

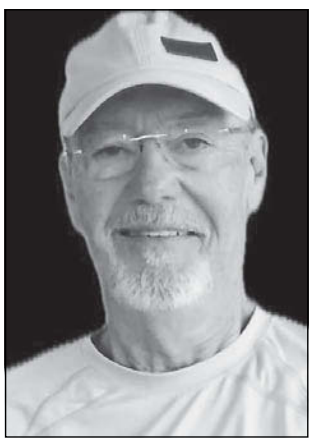
Marie Ann Wregglesworth, 89, passed away October 18, 2025. Celebration of life will be November 15, 2025 at 1pm at Buchanan American Legion. Arrangements by Brown Funeral Home, Niles. www.BrownFuneralHomeNiles.com.

Rachel Irene Grice, 89, passed away on Sunday, October 19, 2025, in Niles, Michigan. Arrangements have been entrusted to and are pending with Brown Funeral Home & Cremation Services.

William Wayne Goins,Sr., 90, passed away on October 20, 2025. Arrangements are pending at Wagner Family Funerals Connelly Chapel, Cassopolis.

Myles Nugent

August 6, 1941 – October 17, 2025



Myles Nugent, 84, passed away peacefully on October 17, 2025, in Sun City West, Arizona.

Born on August 6, 1941, in Chicago, Illinois, Myles lived a full and passionate life marked by dedication to family, community, and the many interests that brought him joy. He was known for his meticulous nature, quiet patience, and a deep love for the open road – whether on two wheels or four. A lifelong motorcycle and car enthusiast, Myles found freedom and peace behind the handlebars and under the hood.

Myles's commitment to an active lifestyle was exemplified by his love of pickleball. In the early 2000s, he was instrumental in introducing and promoting the sport in his former hometown of Niles, Michigan, helping to build a thriving pickleball community that continues to this day.

He is survived by his loving wife, Elva (Vitums) Nugent; his children, Derek Nugent and Jennifer (Jackson) Grismer, from his first marriage to Cynthia Nugent; and his stepchildren, Alan Vitums and Angela Vitums. Along with eight grandchildren. He also leaves behind his siblings Bertha Desas, Martin Nugent, and Theresa Korn. Myles was preceded in death by his brothers, Paul Nugent and Donald Nugent.

He will be remembered not only for his passions and achievements but for the quiet strength, care, and steadiness he brought to the lives of those who knew and loved him.

In lieu of flowers please consider a donation to Tunnels to Towers or the Arizona Classic Thunderbird Club in Myles Nugent's name.

Myles will be buried in the National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona (2929 E Pinnacle Peak Rd. Phoenix, AZ 85024) at a date to be determined.

Funeral Home: Avenidas Funeral Chapel 522 East Western Ave. Avondale, AZ, 85323.

Ernest Everman

July 21, 1934 – October 17, 2025

Ernest Everman, 91, of Niles, died peacefully October 17, 2025 in the comfort of his family's presence.

His life began July 21, 1934 in Niles, born to Otto and Helen Everman. Ernie was a hard -working man. He worked for Berrien County Road Commission for forty- seven years. Ernie was a stubborn and impatient man who loved to tinker. He could often be found outside, gardening, mowing the lawn or just being out in the sun. Ernie was a coffee man; Black not the fancy stuff, He sipped on a cup all day long. He was funny and caring. Everyone in the neighborhood called him "Grandpa". He was very accepting and cared about people and animals. He was a private person who preferred to avoid the spotlight. Most of all, Ernie loved his family and they were his priority.

Ernie will be greatly missed by family and friends. He is survived by one son, William E. (Sharon) Everman of Niles; one favorite grandson, Ryan W. (Analia) Everman of Niles; one great grandson, Caden M. Whitney of Big Rapids and a host of nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his wife, Madline Carol Everman in 2010, three sisters and four brothers.

The family will observe a private remembrance. Ernie will be laid to rest in Mission Hills cemetery.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Halbritter Wickens Funeral Services, Niles. Please share a memory or a message online: halbritterwickens.com.

Dorothy Lacy

April 17, 1948 – October 2, 2025

Dorothy Jean Lacy, passed away peacefully at West Woods of Niles on October 2, 2025. She was born on April 17, 1948 in Niles, Michigan to the late Jonas and Mary Louise (Johnson) Lacy.

Dorothy is preceded in death by her parents and her brother, James Lacy. She is survived by her sister, Patricia (Art) Handley of Niles; niece, Cindy McCabe of Arkansas and nephews, Stephen R. Hile of Ohio and Christopher Handley of North Carolina.

Dorothy loved playing BINGO with her West Woods family and enjoyed bowling in her younger years. She loved attending church services and was a member of Hope Community Church.

Dorothy was a blessing to many. She brought laughter, love, and joy to everyone around her. Her family and friends will remember Dorothy for her kind and caring nature and her unconditional love.

Those wishing to make a memorial donation in honor of Dorothy have been asked to consider West Woods Activities Fund, 1211 Stateline Road, Niles, MI 49120

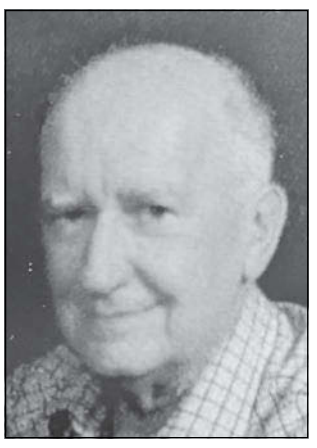
Graveside services to honor Dorothy will take October 8, 2025, 2:00 p.m. at Silverbrook Cemetery.

Photos, memories, and condolences can be left for her family at www.BrownFuneralHomeNiles.com

Arrangements have been entrusted to Brown Funeral Home & Cremation Services.

Calvin Cheesbrough

August 8, 1934 – October 13, 2025



Calvin Edward Cheesbrough, 91, of Niles Michigan, died peacefully at home in his favorite chair, with his pipe, goldfish crackers and a good book beside him on October 13, 2025. His life began August 8, 1934 in Watseka Illinois, the first of three children born to Lucille and Joseph Cheesbrough.

Even though Cal spent his career in the financial world, he had the heart of a cowboy. Cal filled his life with adventures along- side his wife Chris, especially out west to "his" mountains. He was a member of a couple camping clubs and met many friends there. His children brought him tremendous joy, but spending time with his precious grandchildren and the one and only great grand-daughter Addie was his biggest joy of all.

Cal will be greatly missed by family and friends. He is survived by one favorite daughter, Tami Hengesbaugh of St. Charles Illinois; one favorite son, Tim (Debi) Cheesbrough of Belvidere Illinois; five grandchildren, Jake (Michelle) Cheesbrough of Watertown Wisconsin, Josh Cheesbrough of Belvidere Illinois, Brett Hengesbaugh of Chicago Illinois, Claire Hengesbaugh of Ft. Collins Colorado, Drew Hengesbaugh of St. Charles Illinois, great grand-daughter, Adrian Cheesbrough of Watertown Wisconsin; one brother, Leon Cheesbrough of Mundelein Illinois and a host of nieces and nephews. Cal was preceded in death by his sister Cynthia Clifton in October 2024 and the love of his life, his little red-head, Christine Cheesbrough in October of 2001.

Family and friends will gather Thursday, October 23, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. in Halbritter Wickens Funeral Services, 615 East Main Street, Niles, Michigan 49120 We will be going in procession from the visitation to his Mass of Christian burial 11:00 a.m. in St. Mark Catholic Church 3 N 19th St, Niles, MI 49120. The family suggests wearing cowboy boots in Cal's honor. Cal will be laid to rest in Calvary cemetery.

The family prefers contributions be made in memory of Cal to: The American Cancer Society or the charity of your choice.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Halbritter Wickens Funeral Services, Niles. Please share a memory or a message online: halbritterwickens.com.

To order memorial trees or send flowers to the family in memory of Calvin Edward Cheesbrough, please visit our flower store.

Obituary policy: Leader Publications publishes death notices at a cost of $15. Extended obituaries are priced based on character count. If there's an error because of a mistake, the obituary will be reprinted at no charge. For more information, or to submit an obituary, email obits@leaderpub.com.

Berrien Community Foundation recognizes LMC with Golden Acorn Award

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

BENTON HARBOR — The Berrien Community Foundation recognized Lake Michigan College with the coveted Golden Acorn Award at its 73rd annual meeting this month.

"Each year we recognize an organization that goes above and beyond to serve our community," stated BCF Board Secretary Phil Molloy. "This year it is our honor to recognize Lake Michigan College for leadership, partnership, and dedication to the community," he added.

In addition to the award and recognition, LMC will receive a check for $4,000 that is tied to a new book fund for students in need, helping to ensure greater access to educational resources.

"We are proud to partner with the Berrien Community Foundation. They are truly barrier busters for our students – always focusing on how to achieve success for students that need help. We want to thank BCF for all they do to help us build the talent we need in our community to help us improve our quality of life and create a competitive atmosphere for investment and growth," said LMC President Dr. Trevor Kubatzke.

The recently announced Book Fund will assist with books and materials for students facing financial barriers. "We are fortunate as a region to have an organization like the Berrien Community Foundation that is focused on tackling challenges head on, and that understands the importance of access to education and training," Kubatzke added.

Photo provided

Jennifer Lopez was the Niles Scream Park's 2,800,000th visitor.

Niles Scream Park welcomes 2,800,000th visitor

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

NILES — The Niles Scream Park welcomed its 2,800,000th visitor on Sunday, Oct. 19. The lucky guest, Jennifer Lopez of Elkhart, Ind., received a special "ghost pack" of goodies from the park's Board of Directors.

Lopez was visiting with her friend, Nathan Soto. This marked Lopez's fifth visit to the park, a tradition she remembers since middle school, while it was Soto's third visit.

The Niles Scream Park is celebrating 52 consecutive years. The park will be open weekends through Sunday, Oct. 26.

The park also announced several upcoming events:

■ Almost Actorless events on Thursday, Oct. 30, and Friday, Oct. 31.

■ An Adults Only 18+ Night on Saturday, Nov. 1.

■ The Black Out event on Friday, Nov. 7, and Saturday, Nov. 8, from 7-10 p.m.

For more information, call (269) 687-FEAR or visit www.haunted.org.

OPINION

WRITE US: Here's how to submit a letter to the editor:
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Regular mail: Editorial Page, Leader Publications, 25 N. 2nd St., Niles MI 49120

All letters should include a daytime telephone number and street address for verification. Letters must be 500 words or fewer. Leader Publications reserves the right to edit letters for length, style, grammar, inappropriate content and libel.

Why is Halloween starting so much earlier each year?

By JAY L. ZAGORSKY
Boston University (The Conversation)

Halloween is a fun, scary time for children and adults alike – but why does the holiday seem to start so much earlier every year? Decades ago, when I was young, Halloween was a much smaller affair, and people didn't start preparing until mid-October. Today, in my neighborhood near where I grew up in Massachusetts, Halloween decorations start appearing in the middle of summer.

What's changed isn't just when we celebrate but how: Halloween has evolved from a simple folk tradition to a massive commercial event. As a business school professor who has studied the economics of holidays for years, I'm astounded by how the business of Halloween has grown. And understanding why it's such big business may help explain why it's creeping earlier and earlier.

The business of Halloween

Halloween's roots lie in a Celtic holiday honoring the dead, later adapted by the Catholic Church as a time to remember saints. Today it's largely a secular celebration – one that gives people from all backgrounds a chance to dress up, engage in fantasy and safely confront their fears.

That broad appeal has fueled explosive growth. The National Retail Federation has surveyed Americans about their Halloween plans each September since 2005. Back then, slightly more than half of Americans said they planned to celebrate. In 2025, nearly three-quarters said they would – a huge jump in 20 years.

And people are planning to shell out more money than ever. Total spending on Halloween is expected to reach a record US$13 billion this year, according to the federation – an almost fourfold increase over the past two decades. Adjusting for inflation and population growth, I found that the average American will spend an expected $38 on Halloween this year – up from just $18 per person back in 2005. That's a lot of candy corn.

Candy imports show a similar trend. September has long been the key month for the candy trade, with imports about one-fifth higher than during the rest of the year. Back in September 2005, the U.S. imported about $250 million of the sweet stuff. In September 2024, that figure had tripled to about $750 million.

This is part of a larger trend of Halloween becoming a lot more professionalized. For example, when I was a kid, it wasn't unusual for households to pass out brownies, candied apples and other homemade treats to trick-or-treaters. But because of safety concerns and food allergies, for decades Americans have been warned to stick to mass-produced, individually wrapped candies.

The same shift has happened with costumes. Years ago, many people made their own; today, store-bought costumes dominate – even for pets.

Why Halloween keeps creeping earlier

While there's no definitive research establishing why Halloween seems to start earlier each year, the increase in spending is one major driver.

Halloween items are seasonal, which means no one wants to buy giant plastic skeletons on Nov. 1. As total spending grows, retailers order more inventory, and the cost of storing ever-larger amounts of unsold items until the next year becomes a bigger consideration.

Once a season's commercial footprint becomes large enough, retailers begin ordering and displaying merchandise long before it's actually needed. For example, winter coats start appearing in stores in early fall and are typically gone when the snow starts falling. It's the same with Halloween: Retailers put out merchandise early to ensure they're not stuck with unsold goods once the season is over.

They also often price strategically – charging full price when items first hit the shelves, appealing to eager early shoppers, and then marking down prices closer to the holiday. This clears shelves and warehouses, making room for the next upcoming shopping season.

Over the past two decades, Halloween has become an ever-bigger commercial holiday. The growth in people enjoying the holiday and the increase in spending has resulted in Halloween becoming one giant treat for businesses. The big trick for retailers is preventing this holiday from starting before the Fourth of July.

Jay L. Zagorsky is an associate professor at the Questrom School of Business, Boston University. The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts. This article is republished under a Creative Commons license. Read the original article at https://theconversation.com.

SCHOOLS

From page A1

In further business, the board:

■ Approved a contract with Inform Architecture and Ignite for a district-wide facility assessment and utilization study. This study, partially funded by a state grant, will evaluate all buildings and facilities.

■ Approved the continuation of the Michigan Youth in Government program at the high school. The program, which offers students real-life experience with state government and mock trial, is expected to grow to 15 to 20 students this year. The students will attend a fall conference in Battle Creek.

■ Approved the Humanities Club's field trip to Chicago. The trip will allow students to experience different cultures, art, and habitats.

Superintendent's report

Superintendent Greg Blomgren delivered his report to the school board and touched on a variety of subjects, including celebrating successful programs and recent achievements and providing updates on the district's financial and personnel matters.

Blomgren said the district is quickly approaching the second public presentation for the sinking fund millage proposal, which will be put to a vote on Tuesday, Nov. 4. The administration is actively using social media to share simplified information, breaking down the main informational sheet into smaller facts for the community.

Blomgren also discussed the stabilization of enrollment. For the first time in five years, the district's enrollment has stabilized,The current student count is projected to be between 1,817 and 1,820, up from 1,806 last year and reversing a prior trend of projected 50-student losses annually

The district has experienced both athletic and fine arts success in recent weeks. The varsity football team secured a share of the Lakeland Conference Championship – its first conference title in 13 years. The title is shared, resulting in a three-way tie with Berrien Springs and Buchanan.

The high school band earned a Division One rating at their latest competition, a mark not achieved since 2021. Blomgren praised director Ben VanRoekel and the band for their achievement.

"The program needed a reset and he's been able to come here and do that in a very short period of time," Blomgren said. "We are proud and excited of what he's generated, what he's created here in the school community for our band program."

Blomgren also proposed creating a stipend for a coach to lead a combined middle and high school E-Sports team. The stipend would be 1.5 percent of the base salary, or approximately $1,500. This initiative aims to utilize existing computer and gaming equipment, recognizing the trend of colleges offering E-Sports scholarships.

The Dowagiac Union School Board approved several agenda items and received updates on major financial, academic, and facility initiatives.

Man gets prison time for Berrien robbery spree

By DEBRA HAIGHT
For Leader Publications

TURNER

FREEZE

MORBACH

BEADLE

MILLER

WESAW

Edward Deontae Turner, 39, of Midway Drive, Berrien Springs, pleaded guilty in August to two counts of armed robbery, one count of being a felon in possession of a firearm and one count of receiving, concealing or possession of a stolen firearm.

Turner was sentenced to 210 months-17.5 years to 50 years in prison for the two armed robbery counts, 18 months to five years in prison on the felon in possession of a firearm count and 18 months to 10 years in prison on the receiving, concealing or possession of a stolen firearm count.

He has credit for 340 days served and must pay $1,062 in fines, costs and restitution. All the sentences are concurrent.

Turner had originally been charged with 13 counts, including two additional armed robbery counts, three more counts of felon in possession of a firearm and four counts of use of a firearm in the commission of a felony. He had also been charged with being a habitual offender.

The incidents occurred between June 25 and Nov. 14 of last year. The June 25 armed robbery was at the Dollar General in Oronoko Township, the Sept. 6 incident at the Dollar General in Royalton Township, the Oct. 10 incident at the Dollar General in Benton Township and the Nov. 14 incident at the BP gas station in Oronoko Township.

Turner apologized to his victims, the court and his family. He said he regrets not being there in the future if his father dies and for his children's graduations.

"I wish you had thought about that before you took these actions," Berrien County Trial Court Judge Gordon Hosbein said.

Also Monday, an area resident was sentenced to prison for criminal sexual conduct.

Steven Sean Freeze, Jr., of South Bend, pleaded guilty to second-degree criminal sexual conduct and attempted possession of child sexually abusive materials and was sentenced to 86 months to 15 years in prison on the CSC charge and two years to five years on the child sexually abusive materials charge.

He has credit for 181 days already served and must pay $326 in fines and costs. He must also register as a sex offender for 25 years.

The incident involved an underage female and was reported to police on April 4. A statement from the victim indicated that she was scared, felt hopeless and didn't think anyone would help her.

Freeze apologized for his actions. "I'm sorry for everything, I made a bad mistake," he said. "I'm truly wholeheartedly sorry."

Judge Hosbein noted the impact the situation had had on the victim including threats and intimidation from Freeze's family. "The most appropriate and proper sentence is at the top of the guidelines," he said.

An Edwardsburg man who was sentenced to prison in Cass County earlier this summer received another prison term.

Larry Ray Morbach, 55, of Edwardsburg, pleaded guilty to third degree fleeing and eluding police and was sentenced to 14 months to five years in prison and was sentenced to $298 in fines and costs. He has credit for 39 days already served. The sentence is concurrent with the Cass County sentence.

The incident here in Berrien County occurred June 7, the day after he had pleaded guilty in Cass County to delivery/manufacture of methamphetamine. He was sentenced to 12 years to 30 years in prison in the Cass County case.

Berrien County Assistant Prosecutor Jerry Vigansky asked for a prison sentence. He noted that Morbach was speeding up to 90 miles per hour and was weaving in and out of traffic.

Morbach apologized and said he was thankful that he didn't hurt anyone as he fled from police.

In other sentencings:

Justin Lee Beadle, 29, pleaded guilty to taking a protected animal and other charges and was sentenced to credit for one day served, $375 in fines and costs and $6,000 restitution to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

Teikesha Miller, 42, pleaded guilty to possession of methamphetamine and was sentenced to two years probation, credit for 119 days served and $658 in fines and costs. The incident occurred May 19.

Brian Van Wesaw, 57, pleaded guilty to attempted third degree home invasion and was sentenced to 90 days in jail with credit for 71 days already served and $198 in fines and costs. The incident occurred May 13.

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Area residents sentenced on drug charges

By DEBRA HAIGHT
For Leader Publications

HEIMAN

KOSLOSKI

CASSOPOLIS — Three area residents were sentenced for drug offenses Friday in Cass County Circuit Court.

Martha Cramer, 47, of Jones, was convicted of possession of methamphetamine after a September jury trial and was sentenced Friday to 300 days in jail with credit for 44 days served. She must pay $198 in fines and costs.

CRAMER

The incident occurred Jan. 29 at Cramer's home in Jones when probation agents made a routine compliance visit and found meth and scales. At the time she was on probation for a April 19, 2024 possession of meth conviction and she remains on that probation now.

Friday, Cass County Prosecutor Victor Fitz said Cramer is her own worst enemy and continues to make bad decisions. Fitz said that while Cramer may have mental health issues but that many people with mental health issues don't use illegal drugs.

He asked for Cramer to be sentenced to prison, noting her past record which has included not only drug charges but convictions for assault, larceny, weapons and welfare fraud. "The public needs to be protected from her, it gives me no great joy but she needs to go to prison," he said.

Defense attorney Robert Drake said that Cramer has mental health issues, is bipolar and has substance use disorder. He said that a jail rather than prison sentence would be appropriate and still protect the community.

For her part, Cramer said she would like to get help.

"Sometimes people have to pursue treatment on their own," Cass County Circuit Court Judge Mark Herman said. "… You say you don't like meth and that your drug of choice is cocaine, that has to stop as well. Self medicating is always a problem and that brings you into the criminal justice system."

He noted that Cramer started using meth three years ago. "It can't be worth it if you're now facing prison," he said. "Use your smarts and don't use meth. You can't just keep thumbing your nose at the system, at some point it's going to come back and bite you."

Eric Heiman, 36, of Edwardsburg, pleaded guilty to possession of methamphetamine and was sentenced to two years probation, credit for 69 days served and $2,268 in fines and costs. He is ordered to perform 30 hours of community service a week if he is not working. The charge will be reduced to use of meth if he is successful on probation.

The incident occurred July 2 in Porter Township. Police had received a report from Elkhart County police of a truck driving erratically and found the truck and Heiman at a gas station on U.S. 12. Traces of meth were found in the truck.

Judge Herman said Heiman has a 20 year history of drug and alcohol abuse as well as a history of assaultive behavior. He noted that Heiman has served two six month jail terms in Cass County and Elkhart County since 2023.

"You're at the point in life that this is a now or never moment for you," he said. "You need to appreciate what the consequences will be if you fail on probation. If you try to walk the fence and do the least you can do, you will be back, do you want that?"

Corey Daniel Koslosski, 36, of Bristol, Indiana, pleaded guilty to use of methamphetamine and was sentenced to 10 months probation, credit for two days served and $1,855 in fines and costs.

The incident occurred Aug. 3, 2024 in Mason Township.

MDHHS to pause issuance of November SNAP benefits

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

LANSING — The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) received communication from the federal government's Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) indicating that due to the ongoing federal government funding lapse, there may be limited availability of funds to pay full November Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits for approximately 42 million individuals across the nation. FNS has unfortunately directed MDHHS to hold November SNAP issuance and ongoing benefits until further notice.

The federal government's delay of SNAP benefits will place Michiganders at risk of food insecurity and poverty. SNAP, a critical program for families and individuals across Michigan to access food, is the nation's largest food assistance program and one of the most effective tools to reduce food insecurity. Nearly 13 percent of Michigan households, approximately 1.4 million people, receive SNAP benefits. About 43 percent are families with children and 36 percent are families with members who are older adults or disabled.

"The impact of households losing SNAP benefits will be felt around the state," said Elizabeth Hertel, MDHHS director. "SNAP is more than a food assistance program; it's a lifeline for many Michigan families. It helps families put nutritious food on the table, supports local farmers and grocers, and strengthens our communities and economy. We are strongly disappointed by the USDA's decision to delay this assistance, and in Michigan we will do what we can to help blunt this impact."

SNAP participants should reach out to their local MDHHS office with any questions regarding their SNAP benefits or check MI Bridges for updates.

To find additional resources:

- Dial 2-1-1 or visit Find Help – Michigan 2-1-1 for free, confidential assistance and referrals to local food programs and support services.
- Visit the Food Bank Council of Michigan to locate nearby food banks and learn about additional hunger relief efforts.

How SNAP works

FNS administers SNAP at the federal level with states operating the program at the local level, determining eligibility and issuing benefits to eligible households.

SNAP benefits are provided on electronic benefit transfer (EBT) cards that participants can use to purchase food at grocery and convenience stores, farmers markets and other retailers, circulating money directly into the food supply chain and other retail sectors. SNAP spending generates revenue for grocery stores, farmers and other businesses, which helps pay local wages, keeps shelves stocked and boosts the local economy.

SNAP helps lift families out of poverty by allowing them to spend money that would otherwise have been used for food on other goods and services, including health-related activities. A 2021 study showed that infants and children in SNAP families are more likely to see a doctor for periodic check-ups. Additionally, older adults using SNAP are more likely to take the full dosage of prescription medications because they have enough income to afford food and medicine, compared to other older adults not participating in SNAP.

According to new economic analysis from the National Grocers Association, SNAP funding supports approximately 388,000 jobs, more than $20 billion in direct wages, resulting in over $4.5 billion in state and federal tax revenue.

SNAP in Michigan

- In FY 2024, the average SNAP household in Michigan received $335.03 in SNAP benefits per month, which is about $173 per person per month or $5.68 per person per day. Households with very low incomes receive more SNAP benefits than households closer to the poverty line because they need more help affording nutritious food.
- 492,225 children benefit from SNAP.
- 38,513 veterans participating in SNAP.
- 36 percent SNAP households have older adults.
- 43 percent of SNAP households have children.
- 51 percent of households have a person with a disability.
- 78 percent of SNAP households include someone with earned income.
- In Michigan, more than 9,700 retailers accept SNAP. In 2023, retailers redeemed over $3.6 million in SNAP.

To be eligible for SNAP in Michigan, applicants must be a U.S. citizen (or acceptable non-citizen status) and must live in Michigan. Eligibility is based on the financial situation of all members of a household. Everyone who lives together, purchases and prepares food together is considered a member of the same household group. In order to determine if a household is eligible for SNAP, MDHHS will review a household's expenses, assets and income. Expenses include rent, mortgage, utility bills, child support and dependent care expenses. For individuals with a disability or who are at least 60 years old, medical care, medical supplies and health insurance premiums may be included as an expense.

Niles man injured in tractor vs. minivan crash

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

HOWARD TOWNSHIP — A Niles man was injured Thursday after a minivan struck the tractor he was driving in Howard Township, according to the Cass County Sheriff's Office.

At approximately 5:24 p.m. Thursday, deputies were called to investigate a personal injury crash near the intersection of Leet Road and Worrell Street in Howard Township.

The investigation shows that 55-year-old Michael Studer, of Niles, was at the intersection at Leet Road and Worrell Street and slowed down to conduct an Eastbound Turn onto Worrell Street. The driver of the second vehicle, 78-year-old Larry Chapman, of Niles, attempted to pass the tractor operated by Studer on the left, colliding with the tractor as it conducted its eastbound turn.

Studer sustained injuries and was transported by EMS to Memorial Hospital in South Bend, Indiana.

Assisting in this crash was the Michigan State Police and SMCAS.

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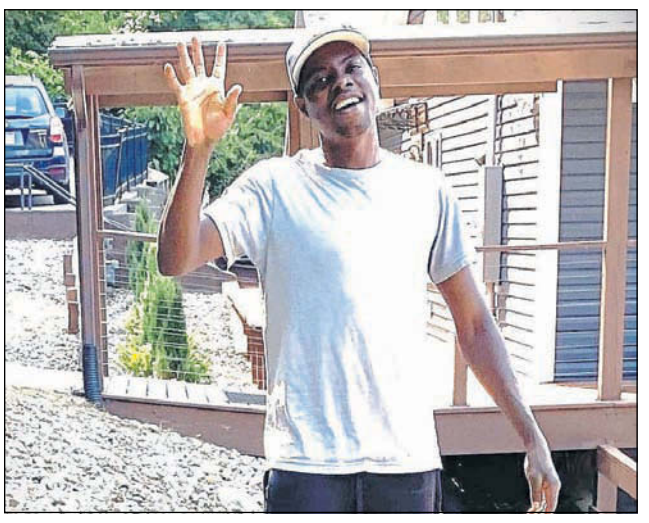

Photo provided

Mohammed Hasen poses while on site at Stone Lake in Cassopolis.

REFUGEE

From page A1

Mohammed says he enjoys his job and is working to learn English and a variety of other new skills. He has hopes to one day attend college, noting a desire to learn. He enjoys reading and riding his bike. He is appreciative of his life in Cassopolis and those who helped him get here, especially compared to the situation he came from.

"I feel very lucky," he said. "We were living in a terrible situation."

His main focus now, though, is bringing his wife and children to Cassopolis to join him. Without a green card, he is unable to visit them, but he sends them money when he can and speaks to them on the phone often. He is hoping to spread the word about his situation, seeking assistance from the United States government and anyone else that can help him bring his family to their new home.

Several members of the community have taken up his cause. Congressional Representative Tim Walberg has received letters of support regarding Mohammed's plight from Cassopolis Village Manager Emilie LaGrow and other supervisors and coworkers at the village, as well as those from his landlord and the Cassopolis-Vandalia Chamber of Commerce. On September 8th, the Cassopolis Village Council unanimously approved a resolution requesting support for Mohammed.

Walberg's office did not return requests for a comment or update, but, according to Ted Gogol, who helped present the letters to the Congressman at a recent small business event, his office is familiar with Mohammed's story and is willing to assist him.

Mohammed has maintained a sunny outlook as he continues settling into his new life, but he describes each day as difficult, knowing his family is stuck in limbo in the refugee camp in Ethiopia and knowing that the rest of his family, who he can rarely speak to, may face war at any time back in Sudan.

"I'm living alone, lonely" he describes. "It's very hard for me to say. I left my family back there. Sometimes it's just very hard."

BOOK

From page A1

"My oldest thought it was really awesome," he said. "My middle son was like, 'eh, it's another book.' My 3-year-old daughter hasn't fully grasped it yet, but she thinks it's cool. We have a copy at home that's already well-worn."

With one published book under his belt, Lee said he has several more stories already written and hopes to find an illustrator for future works.

"I would love to and will probably try and publish a couple more," he said.

While writing a book was a lot of work, Lee enjoyed the process.

"It was a fun process to learn, and my biggest takeaway is that if you are willing to put in the time, literally anyone can publish a book," he said.

DART

From page A1

programs that benefit those in vital need of assistance.

"In Dowagiac, we're focused on creating tomorrow. This upgraded, tech-enhanced fleet of vehicles, along with recent innovations like the DART on Demand service, are examples of how we're innovators in rural public transportation," said Dowagiac Assistant City Manager Amanda Sleigh. "What better way to celebrate this service to the community than by using it to help give back to the people of Dowagiac. Thank you to our partners Family Fare, Harding's, and Save A Lot, and to ACTION Ministries for its important work."

"The DART Stuff-A-Bus event will go a long way in helping our non-profit feed the hungry in our community," added ACTION Ministries President Becky Peters. "We encourage the community to consider being 'Stuff-A-Bus' heroes by donating non-perishable items that can help a neighbor or friend get through a challenging time. Thank you to the City of Dowagiac, DART, Family Fare, Harding's, and Save A Lot for creating this opportunity to give back."

Demonstrators clash in Niles over government shutdown blame

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

NILES — Two separate demonstrations on opposite ends of the political spectrum took place Monday afternoon in Niles.

About a dozen GOP supporters gathered at Donovan Smith Veterans Memorial Park at 11th and Main for what they called the "Stop the Schumer Shutdown" rally. Congressman Tim Walberg surprised participants with a brief appearance at the event. Organizers Carla Johnson and Brenda Beadenkopf said the group felt support from Walberg and the community.

"It's overwhelming," Johnson said. "They didn't even know about the congressman coming so they were just happy."

"It was wonderful that he came and wanted to thank you for showing up here every couple of weeks and that we appreciate your smiling faces and keep smiling because we don't have to frown because we tell the truth," Beadenkopf added. "We're happy with the people that we elected and what they're doing and the job they're doing."

Less than a mile away, more than a dozen demonstrators gathered in front of Rep. Walberg's Niles office for a rally organized by the Southwest Michigan Coalition 4 Democracy. Karen Kemp, one of the founders of Coalition 4 Democracy, was pleased with Monday's turnout after more than 800 people participated in the "No Kings" rally on Saturday.

"I think this is a pretty good turnout," she said. "I came today wondering who might show up and we had a pretty good turnout because we're concerned. We're paying our government workers and the Congress to show up and do something and they're not. We don't like that one bit."

Beadenkopf said that she did not agree with the premise of the "No Kings Day" rallies taking place over the weekend.

"I had a lot of my relatives in Pennsylvania going to the 'No Kings' thing and President Trump never said he was a king. We don't say he's a king. The Democrats crowned him a king, and then they said 'we don't want any kings,' so it's very hypocritical. They're just trying to fabricate something out of nothing. There's no such thing as kings or any such thing."

Beadenkopf believes the Trump administration is doing their best to get the country back on track.

"Trump is trying to take the power away from the central government and give it back to the people as much as he possibly can because it has become a lot more centralized, especially over the covid shutdown. We need to spread that back to the people because a lot of our rights were taken away during that time, so we're very thrilled. I know President Trump has a big job ahead of him, but he's working on many, many fronts, and he's got a lot of great people that are working hand in hand with him, too."

Kemp was happy to see so many people at the "No Kings Day" rally on Saturday.

"It was great to see that kind of unity with us ordinary folks, not only just here in Niles but across the country, and what was really impressive, across the world," she said. "The rest of the world is cheering for us. They want us to do good and we need to be doing good. This is enough of this. Let's get on with the real work of making this country really great."

Photos by Maxwell Harden / Leader Publications

More than a dozen demonstrators gathered in front of Rep. Walberg's Niles office for a rally organized by the Southwest Michigan Coalition 4 Democracy.

About a dozen GOP supporters gathered at Donovan Smith Veterans Memorial Park at 11th and Main for what they called the "Stop the Schumer Shutdown" rally.

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More than a dozen demonstrators gathered in front of Rep. Walberg's Niles office for a rally.

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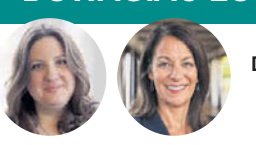
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Scott Hassinger / For The Truth

Sophomore Riley Szalai (19) of Edwardsburg works to get the ball from Hudsonville Unity Christian's Cody Walters in the first half of Tuesday's regional finals in Mattawan.

Edwardsburg soccer falls to Unity Christian in D2 regional championship

By SCOTT HASSINGER
For Leader Publications

MATTAWAN — The Edwardsburg boys' soccer team became a family this fall.

That's how long-time head coach Sean Jesse summed up the progress the Eddies made on the field during the 2025 season.

Edwardsburg's season came to an end with a 4-1 Division 2 regional championship loss Thursday to Hudsonville Unity Christian at Mattawan High School.

Edwardsburg finished 17-2-1, including winning an outright Wolverine Conference championship, along with a district title and earned the school's first-ever regional win with a 2-1 shootout victory over Plainwell on Tuesday.

Unity Christian, which improves to 18-0-4, advances to the state semifinals Wednesday, October 29 where the Crusaders take on Cedar Springs at Grand Rapids Forest Hills Northern.

"I'm so proud of this team. We went 72 days without a loss, since August 17. That's phenomenal in its own right, but the family culture these guys developed is what I'm most proud of," Jesse said.

See **SOCCER**, page B1

'I wouldn't miss it'

Maxwell Harden / Leader Publications

Trenton Scott (center) poses with father Keith and mother Nicole.

Niles father fights cancer to stand with son on Senior Night

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

NILES — Trenton Scott had a Senior Night he will never forget.

The 6-3, 285-pound offensive lineman helped pave the way for the offense in Niles' 49-14 victory over Plainwell to keep the Vikings undefeated and clinch at least a share of the Wolverine Conference title.

The game was especially meaningful for Scott, who was able to share his moment with father Keith and mother Nicole both in attendance. Keith, four days removed from having surgery to address his stage four prostate cancer, was able to recover enough to see his son shine under the Friday night lights.

"It meant a lot," said Scott after the game. "I was worried he wasn't going to be able to make it for Senior Night. I was worried at first, but he actually came out of surgery Monday and was released Tuesday… It just meant a lot for him to be here. It definitely made me happy. He is one of my role models in life."

A lifelong resident of Niles, Keith has always loved Vikings football, a program he feels is now thriving. He has been assisting the athletic department for more than 10 years, staying on after former athletic director Jeff Upton retired and Matt Brawley was hired.

"Both have been really good to me," he said.

He described his son Trenton's start in youth football, noting that youth wrestling helped Scott with learning how to use his physical gifts and to be physical.

"He was a big kid but he was always scared he was gonna hurt somebody," Keith said. "So it was all about teaching him that you're not going to hurt them and there's a way to handle someone without hurting them."

By Scott's second year of football, Keith could see the promise in this current senior class.

"You could tell back then that this group of kids could be really good in high school," Keith said. "That class [of seniors] has played together the whole time. I remember when Trenton was in eighth grade, the freshman class above him was saying, 'Man, we can't wait until you guys get here.' This class had all the big kids and all the linemen. You could see the promising future, but it took a good coach to get them there."

Keith said that his journey with prostate cancer began about three months prior, when a checkup led to a biopsy and subsequent PET scan to determine the severity. He was told he needed to have surgery. The surgery, a six-hour procedure using robotics, took place on Monday. He received confirmation that everything was removed and that he should be fine after a couple of weeks.

"The last two months have been crazy," Keith said. "I knew I could defeat it. I just didn't want Trenton to worry about it or my daughter Amani to worry about it. Cancer is not easy but this is one of the 'easier' ones to defeat, so I was very thankful for that."

He advised people to get regular checkups, noting that cancer can occur even in people who do not smoke or drink.

For Keith, after everything he has been through, walking out with Scott on Senior Night was a game he was not going to miss.

"I knew after I had my surgery, they were never gonna stop me from coming out here," Keith said. "I've been watching Trenton play since he was seven, and I'll watch him maybe through college. I told myself I wouldn't miss Senior Day. Even if I was still in the hospital, I would have found a way to get out. I'm so proud of what he accomplished and that he helped build this program with his fellow brothers so other little kids can see what Niles can become."

Edwardsburg volleyball sweeps Niles

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

EDWARDSBURG — The Edwardsburg volleyball team swept rival Niles in three sets on Thursday, improving their overall season record to 28-8 and maintaining a perfect 7-0 record in Wolverine Conference play. Theå set scores were 25-10, 25-20, 25-12.

Sarah Pippin led the Eddies with a match-high 20 kills and added five digs, one block, and four aces. Mya Eberlein had 10 kills, three digs, one block and an ace while Ella Laskowski added nine kills and eight digs.

The offense was led by Rylie Rosenkrantz, who finished with 40 assists. She also added two kills and two blocks. Defensively, Sophie Kuntz had six digs, while Courtney Zache added four kills and one block.

SMC volleyball earns share of conference title

SUBMITTED

DOWAGIAC — The Southwestern Michigan College volleyball team swept Lansing Community College at home Tuesday night to clinch at least a share of the Western Conference title. The Roadrunners' record is now 24-6 overall and 9-1 in conference play.

"We worked incredibly hard preparing for this match, and we came out and executed in every aspect of the game," said Head Coach Jenny Nate. The team adjusted to potential injury issues, as starter Talan Hiemstra was cleared to play, but Maggie Arney remained sidelined.

Nate praised the team's mental focus.

"We knew if we just play our game, stay calm and focus on our goals, that we could sweep them," she said.

Lily Kowalik led the offense with 12 kills, followed by Amie Schutz with nine kills and Ryli Burks with eight kills. The offense was orchestrated by Meah Evans with 21 assists and Sophia Bachman with 11 assists.

At the net, Ella Norwood finished with seven blocks, while Evans contributed six blocks and Kowalik had five. The back row was led by Carlie Ritchie with 10 digs, followed by Schutz with nine digs.

From the service line, Hiemstra had a team-high 12 points and four aces. Schutz and Evans also performed well, with each having nine points and three aces.

New SMC athletic trainer ready to support athletes

By JOHN EBY
Southwestern Michigan College

DOWAGIAC — Ashley Russo of Beacon Health System officially became Southwestern Michigan College's athletic trainer on Sept. 28.

"My favorite part about this job is creating a space for athletes to be comfortable and to feel safe," Russo said. "Being a student athlete is difficult and can sometimes feel incredibly isolating – especially when trying to recover from an injury.

"I like being the person to remind kids that their sport is not the only interesting thing about them and they are capable of amazing things both on and off the court.

"My all-time favorite part of this job is being around the athletes all the time," she said. "I love getting to be a part of their journey and giving them the support they need when things get hard."

Russo and her older brother, a Major League Baseball statistical analyst, grew up playing every sport they could in elementary school until deciding that baseball/softball was their primary passion.

"I had grown up going to tournaments every weekend, whether they were mine or my brother's," Russo said. "I was constantly around sports and athletes and it was my happy place. At the end of the day I wanted to be just like him so when he got serious about baseball I followed in his footsteps in softball, even playing the same positions.

"I had no idea what I wanted to go to school for. For a while I thought I wanted to be an elementary school teacher until I took an anatomy class in high school and was fascinated by the human body.

"My teacher for this course passed away tragically shortly after I graduated from high school. Every day I'm grateful I wound up in his class so that I could end up here.

"But then came the question of, well, where do I even go with this? I was lucky enough to find exercise science and the field of athletic training.

One class helped me to find the passion I had and led me to what I would call my dream career.

"I graduated from Ball State in 2022 with my undergrad in

See **TRAINER**, page B2

Photo Provided

Ashley Russo

Undefeated Niles earns 49-14 Senior Night win over Plainwell

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

NILES — The Niles football team made sure to make the most of its Senior Night.

The undefeated Vikings (8-0,6-0) honored 23 seniors en route to a 49-14 win over visiting Plainwell, clinching at least a share of the Wolverine Conference in the process.

Niles scored seven times on plays of 32, 41, 2, 25, 33, 6 and 15 yards. Will Turnbull (one rushing and two passing), Alex Anderson, Elijah Norris, Brandon Walsh, Brogan Lake and Sheldon Cornelius found the end zone for the Vikings, who led 42-0 at halftime. Plainwell's two touchdowns, a 61-yard run and a 36-yard pass, came in the fourth quarter against Niles' reserves.

"I thought we played really well," said Niles head coach Scot Shaw. "I'm proud of the way we came out of the gate. It is a fun game when you play hard."

"We came out strong," said senior offensive lineman Trenton Scott. "We've been scoring early and getting three-and-outs from our defense, props to them for getting after it. Offensively, we're scoring after three to six plays and just marching down the field."

Thousands of fans turned out to support the senior class – the winninggest in school history with 36 wins and counting – which has amassed three Wolverine Conference championships, two district titles, one regional title and a Division 4 state runner-up finish on its way toward building a winning tradition at Niles.

"They've meant everything to this program, especially the kids that have been here four years that have demonstrated and led by example and been at everything and just great people on top of being good football players," Shaw said. "I couldn't be prouder of them for the year they're having and the last four years that they've had, and it's not over. We talk a lot about that too but I'm really, really proud of them."

For Scott and his fellow seniors, Senior Night was more than just a game. It was a celebration of memories made and milestones reached together.

"It meant a lot," he said. "We've been playing together since we were five or six years old, so we definitely all have a connection. We all know what we're going to do. To be honest, it's going to be sad once it's all over. Today was sad, seeing all the seniors lined up for our last regular season home game. Playing with each other just means a lot to us."

Standing in the way of Niles' first undefeated season since 1979 and an outright Wolverine Conference title is Edwardsburg (6-2,4-2), who fell to Vicksburg 38-35 in a thriller. The Eddies host the Vikings at 7 p.m. Friday.

"We definitely just have to match the physicality we've shown all year," Scott said. "Edwardsburg is a good team that just took a loss but we can't let that affect us. We're a little greedy and want to keep the trophy all to ourselves. It's going to be a good battle at Edwardsburg."

"We're gonna go in with the thought that it's ours to lose and we're gonna win it," Shaw said. "We're gonna play as hard as we can. I told them just now that it's okay to be selfish, and we don't have to share."

Maxwell Harden / Leader Publications

The Niles football team earned a 49-14 win over visiting Plainwell on Senior Night last Friday.

Photo provided

Pat Bakeman (left) and Jeremy Truitt (right) in the booth for Dowagiac's matchup against Buchanan Oct. 10.

Dowagiac broadcaster calls 200th football game

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

DOWAGIAC — On Friday, Oct. 10, longtime broadcaster Pat Bakeman reached a major milestone as he called his 200th Dowagiac Chieftain varsity football game for the Dowagiac Chieftains Network. He was joined in the booth by fellow commentator Jeremy Truitt for the broadcast.

Bakeman, who began covering Chieftain games in 2005, has been a familiar voice for Dowagiac football fans for over two decades.

The milestone game ended on a high note as the Chieftains defeated the Bucks 40–26 in a strong showing on their home field.

Dowagiac is set to face Williamson Friday night. Pat Bakeman will be back behind the mic, this time teaming up with his long time partner Shawn Williamson to bring fans all the live action.

Fans can tune in to live broadcasts or listen on demand for Dowagiac Chieftain games through the Dowagiac Chieftains Network on Facebook or by visiting webca.st/268271.

Edwardsburg football falls to Vicksburg 38-35

By MAXWELL HARDEN
max.harden@leaderpub.com

VICKSBURG — The Edwardsburg Eddies fell to the Vicksburg Bulldogs in a tightly contested matchup, 38-35. The game was a scoring frenzy, with five lead changes in the second half.

The Eddies took the early lead with a lengthy drive in the first quarter, capped by a 2-yard touchdown run by Giovanni Orue on fourth and goal. The 9-minute drive gave Edwardsburg an 8-0 lead with 1:13 left in the first quarter. Vicksburg answered in the second quarter with a 5-yard touchdown pass, closing the gap to 8-6. Edwardsburg quickly extended its lead when Codey Clark connected with Cameron Hayden for a spectacular 81-yard touchdown pass on third and 11, pushing the lead to 15-6.

Vicksburg followed up the big play by successfully kicking a 44-yard field goal after an Edwardsburg turnover on downs, making the score 16-15 with 2:46 remaining in the half. However, the Eddies reclaimed the lead just before halftime after a great return by Caden DeHart set up a 1-yard touchdown run by Hayden, giving Edwardsburg a 22-16 advantage at the break.

The second half began with a Vicksburg touchdown, a 1-yard run by Johnson, that retook the lead for the Bulldogs 23-22 with 7:08 left in the third quarter. The lead bounced back to Edwardsburg when Hayden broke free for a 37-yard touchdown run, making the score 28-23 with 2:33 left in the third. The back-and-forth continued into the final quarter when Jayden Keiser scored on a 6-yard run, giving Vicksburg a 31-28 lead with 10:09 remaining.

In the final minutes, DeHart ran for a 22-yard touchdown, putting the Eddies up 35-31 with 2:57 left. However, Vicksburg responded quickly, securing the win on a 69-yard touchdown pass from Easton Moughton to Maguire Bowles with just 1:51 remaining, making the final score 38-35.

Buchanan beats Benton Harbor 40-6

By MAXWELL HARDEN
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BENTON HARBOR — The Buchanan Bucks defeated Benton Harbor 40-6 on Friday, improving their season record to 5-3.

The Bucks had a 319 to 132 advantage in total yards. Buchanan totaled 242 yards on the ground while holding Benton Harbor to -14 rushing yards. Max Cornelius led all rushers with 124 yards and two touchdowns on 15 carries.

Lucas Zeiger totaled 25 rushing yards and two touchdowns on seven carries and Cy Carlin had an efficient day passing, completing 6 of 7 attempts for 73 yards and one touchdown. Brody Reed was the leading receiver, catching four passes for 55 yards and one touchdown and Owen Thompson added two receptions for 17 yards.

The Bucks' defense forced two turnovers. Owen Thompson recorded a fumble recovery and Reed had an interception. Ryan Hickok and Thompson each recorded a sack for the Bucks. Reed also added a 25-yard punt return.

Benton Harbor's offense gained 146 yards through the air but had a -14 net yards rushing. They completed 9 of 18 passes for 146 yards, one touchdown, and one interception.

Buchanan hosts Muskegon Catholic Central (2-5) at 7 p.m. Friday.

SOCCER

From page B2

Scott Hassinger / For The Truth

Edwardsburg's Mobius Stubblefield (in blue) battles Unity Christian's Adam Breuker (6) for possession during Thursday's Division 2 regional title game.

The Eddies built that culture with the assistance of 10 seniors. Playing in their final match for Edwardsburg were Hayden Hiemstra, Tanner Krah, Maverick Gates, Austin Leak, Will Hafner, Mobius Stubblefield, Maxton Welsh, Tyler Petruska, Gavin Roe and Sebastiano Caporate.

"It starts with our senior class. They have been phenomenal and they bought into what the coaches have instilled into them. We are here because of our Seniors. Everyone else on the team saw the example they set and kind've say, hey I want to do that too," Jesse said.

Despite losing a large group of seniors, Edwardsburg features a fairly young roster with several sophomore and junior starters in the lineup.

"We want our younger guys to come into next season with the same expectations that we're going to be here again," Jesse said. "Our underclassmen have to believe they can keep that culture going."

It took Edwardsburg a bit to adjust to Unity Christian's quickness in transition during the opening minutes of the first half.

Unity Christian went in front 1-0 on a goal by senior midfielder Jack VanEyk at the 33:26 mark.

The Crusaders would then increase their advantage to 2-0 before halftime with a goal off the foot of sophomore forward Jaden Briseno at 6:32.

"I think those first five minutes were a little eye-opening to us. Unity Christian is fast-paced and move the ball very well. It took us around 10 minutes to get ourselves into the game and we were competitive once we settled in, but we had already dug ourselves a bit of a hole," Jesse said.

Senior forward Cody Walters extended the Crusaders' lead to 3-0 just seconds into the final half with a goal past Eddies' netminder Law Gates at 39:12.

Edwardsburg scored its lone goal when Chance Jacobs blasted a shot past Unity Christian junior goalie Alen Deppe at 33:50 with Haverick Gates racking up the assist for the Eddies.

Walters scored Unity Christian's final goal of the evening with 8:37 remaining.

"I've been around soccer for 36 years. Unity Christian is a very good soccer team, one of the best I've seen. They do a great job of transitioning and getting bodies around the ball. We knew what they liked to do and planned for that, but they are very good at speeding you up and putting pressure on you. Even though we worked on defending that, they were just more successful. They are quicker in transition so that made it difficult for us to counter against it," Jesse said.

Unity Christian had 17 shots on goal to eight for Edwardsburg. Each team had two corner kicks.

Law Gates finished the match with 13 saves in goal for Edwardsburg. Deppe recorded four saves in the net for Unity Christian.

"I think a big thing we wanted to do as a team was to come out and pressure them (Edwardsburg) a lot on their half of the field and keep the ball there. We did that well from the beginning of the match and that just set the tone for our offense in creating some chances. This group of kids we have are real technical players who have played together for a while. They have confidence and have some creativity with the ball," Unity Christian head coach Ian Billin said.

TRAINER

From page B1

exercise science and then graduated again in 2024 with my Masters in Athletic Training.

"I worked for about a year at John Adams High School (in South Bend), which is a location that will always hold a special place in my heart. I am still fairly new to this career with only a year of paid work as an athletic trainer (not counting the years of observation and internships that come along with the schooling)."

Russo originally was only licensed in Indiana, but when this job became an option, she applied and received her license in Michigan.

Russo grew up in and still resides in Mishawaka with her mom. Her brother, the MLB statistical analyst, moved to Portland, Ore.

With athletic training and Beacon, it's typically an overseeing body for multiple athletic trainers spread out around northern Indiana and some of Michigan.

"Our home base is typically our school and we really only ever go on site at Beacon for meetings or trainings," she said. "Beacon's reach helps me to provide quality care for my athletes as we continue to expand."

"When I initially started at SMC I was a PRN" (an abbreviation for the Latin term pro re nata, or "as needed") only coming to events for about two weeks so that I could provide cross-coverage to other schools that needed a hand. Sept. 28 was when I officially made the switch to fulltime at SMC."

"Working with Beacon gives me and my athletes plenty of advantages," Russo said. "We have a team doctor, Linda Mansfield, who is always willing to answer questions or work to get my athletes seen as soon as possible. It gives me an open line of communication where we can really streamline care and get them back to their sport quickly. Beacon has also given me access to multiple mentors who I know are only a call away if I have a question or a case I want to pick someone's brain about."

"Going through grad school I didn't think I would end up working in the college setting," Russo said. "I had most of my experiences at high schools and thought that would be the setting I ended up in.

"Transitioning from high school to college was a little nerve-wracking at first, but really the switch to SMC has been incredibly smooth. I've only been here about a month but the connection I've built with these athletes is already something I never want to lose."

In her free time she reads mysteries and thrillers, rewatches a handful of favorite shows such as "Grey's Anatomy," "Gilmore Girls" and "The Office" and spends time with friends, family or her boyfriend of almost two years.

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NOTICE TO CREDITORS:
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Date October 13, 2025

Jessica Blake P79847
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P.O. Box 7038
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Huntington Woods, MI 48070
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313-424-8685
Telephone no.

Joanne Streeter
Personal representative name
1012 N. Roosevelt Street
Address
Silver Lake, IN 46982
City, state, zip

Howard Township
Cass County, Michigan
Board of Trustees
October 21, 2025
The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Township Hall.

Board Action
Approved Meeting Agenda.
Approved the minutes of the 09/16/25 Board Meeting
Approved the financial report with an ending balance of 1,664,199.28 including a CD
Approved the payment of bills through October 21, 2025
Approved the departmental reports
Tabled Ordinance #235
Tabled Resolution #2025-008
Approved Snowplow Contract to Darr Phillips
Approved Trick or Treat Oct 31 from 6-7:30p
Approved Park Board purchase of two mowers for $21,200
Approved Budget Amendment
Approved Professional Services Agreement Williams and Works
Approved Planning Commission denial of Amendment request by Pivot Energy.
Public Comment occurred
Adjourn the meeting at 7:49 p.m.

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NOTICE OF REGISTRATION FOR THE ELECTION TO BE HELD November 4, 2025 DOWAGIAC, MICHIGAN

TO THE QUALIFIED ELECTORS OF THE CITY OF DOWAGIAC:
You are hereby notified to register to vote or to change your address for the November 4, 2025, Election.
To register, visit any Secretary of State Office, the Cass County Clerk's Office or your City Clerk's Office at City Hall. Electors who wish to register with the City Clerk may do so: Wednesdays 1:00 to 3:00 pm and Thursdays 1:00 to 3:00 pm

The Ballot features:
Mayoral candidates
Don Lyons
Patrick Bakeman

Treasurer -

Councilman-Ward 1	**Councilman-Ward 2**	**Councilman-Ward 3**
Tharan K. Suvarna	Laura Desilets	Breanna Bundy
		Justin Doyle

Proposals:
MEDICAL CARE FACILITY
County of Cass Medical Care Facility Millage Renewal .4881mills for 10 years.
Full text of the ballot proposition may be obtained at the Cass County Clerk's Office, 120 N. Broadway, Cassopolis MI 49031; Telephone (269) 445-4464.
Local School District – Dowagiac Union School District Sinking Fund Millage Proposal
DOWAGIAC SCHOOLS
DOWAGIAC UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT SINKING FUND MILLAGE PROPOSAL .5 MILL FOR 10 YEARS

Full text of the ballot proposition may be obtained at the administrative offices of Dowagiac Union School District, 243 S. Front Street, Dowagiac, Michigan 49047-1738, telephone: (269) 782-4400

You may register to vote at the following location:
Dowagiac City Hall, 241 South Front Street; Dowagiac, MI 49047
By: Patty Patano, City Clerk, (269) 783-2502

NOTICE OF ELECTION & PUBLIC ACCURACY TEST POKAGON TOWNSHIP NOVEMBER 4, 2025, SPECIAL ELECTION

TO THE QUALIFIED ELECTORS OF POKAGON TOWNSHIP:

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Special Election will be held on Tuesday, November 4, 2025.
THE POLLS OF SAID ELECTION WILL OPEN AT 7:00 AM AND CLOSE AT 8:00 PM ON NOVEMBER 4, 2025.
PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the following proposals will be on the ballot:
MEDICAL CARE FACILITY: County of Cass Medical Care Facility Millage Renewal .4881 mills for 10 years.
DOWAGIAC SCHOOLS: Dowagiac Union School District sinking fund millage proposal .5 mill for 10 years.
Full text of the ballot proposal may be obtained at the Pokagon Township Clerk's office, 30683 Peavine St. Dowagiac, MI 49047, phone: 269-782-8756. A sample ballot may be viewed at mi.gov/vote.
Absentee ballots can be obtained by contacting: Pokagon Twp. Clerk, Christina Davis: clerk@pokagontownshipmi.gov or Ph: 269-782-8756
Polling locations are handicap accessible, and persons with special needs, as defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act, shall be supplied with Braille or audio instructions upon request.

ELECTORS WILL VOTE IN THEIR TOWNSHIP
Pokagon Twp Hall: 30683 Peavine St. Dowagiac, MI 49047

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Public Accuracy Test for the November 4, 2025, Special Election will be conducted for the Township of Pokagon on the following date and location:

Pokagon Township Hall
30683 Peavine St.
Dowagiac, MI 49047
Monday, October 27, 2025, at 6:30 PM.

The Public Accuracy Test is conducted to demonstrate that the program and computer used to tabulate the results of the November 4, 2025, Special Election have been prepared in accordance with the law.
Persons with disabilities needing accommodation should contact the clerk's office.

Christina Davis, Pokagon Township Clerk

NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Cass County, Michigan starting promptly at 10:00 a.m. on November 5, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. Mortgage ("the "Mortgage") made by Patrick J. Brodzinski, a single man, as Mortgagor to First Federal Savings Bank, with its address at 301 East Ninth Street, Rochester, IN, 46975-0527 as Mortgagee, dated February 13, 2009, and recorded February 24, 2009, Liber 989, Page 2381, Cass County Records, Cass County, Michigan. The balance owing on the Mortgage is $47,662.36 at the time of this Notice. The Mortgage contains a power of sale and no suit or proceeding at law or in equity has been instituted to recover the debt secured by the Mortgage, or any part of the Mortgage. TAKE NOTICE that on Wednesday, November 5, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. local time, or any adjourned date thereafter, the Mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale at public auction to the highest bidder, at the Cass County Courthouse located at 60296 M 62, Cassopolis, Michigan. The Mortgagee will apply the sale proceeds to the debt secured by the Mortgage as stated above, plus interest on the amount due at the fixed rate of 5%per annum; all legal costs and expenses, including attorney fees allowed by law; and also any amount paid by the Mortgagee to protect its interest in the property. The property to be sold at foreclosure is all of that real estate situated in Milton Township, County of Cass, State of Michigan, described as: LOT NUMBERED FIVE (5), DUNNING ACRES, ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF, AS RECORDED IN LIBER 16 OF PLATS, PAGE 333, CASS COUNTY RECORDS. PATRICK J. BRODZINSKI AND PATRICK JOHN BRODZINSKI ARE ONE AND THE SAME PERSON. Parcel No. 14-070-300-005-00 Commonly known address: 29154 E. US 12, Niles, Michigan 49120 The redemption period shall be one (1) year from the date of sale pursuant to MCLA 600.3240(12), unless deemed abandoned and then pursuant to the time frames provided for in MCL 600.3241a. Pursuant to MCL 600.3278, Mortgagor will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. September 15, 2025 First Federal Savings Bank PLUNKETT COONEY KELLI L. BAKER (P49960) Attorney for Mortgagee 333 Bridge Street NW, Suite 530 Grand Rapids, Michigan 49504 (616) 752-4624
(09-27)(10-25)

Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Cass County, starting promptly at 10:00 AM on NOVEMBER 19, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.
Default has been made in the conditions of a mortgage made by Michael Antisdel and Sherry Antisdel, husband and wife, to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for First NLC Financial Services, LLC, Mortgagee, dated November 16, 2006, and recorded December 15, 2006, in Liber 950, Page 1099 Cass County Records, Michigan. Said mortgage is now held by Deutsche Bank National Trust Company, as Trustee, in trust for the registered holders of Morgan Stanley Home Equity Loan Trust 2007-2, Mortgage Pass-Through Certificates, Series 2007-2, by assignment. There is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of Ninety-Seven Thousand Seven Hundred Eleven and 60/100 Dollars ($97,711.60).
Under the power of sale contained in said mortgage and the statute in such case made and provided, notice is hereby given that said mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at public venue at the place of holding the circuit court within Cass County, Michigan at 10:00 AM on NOVEMBER 19, 2025.
Said premises are located in the Township of Howard, Cass County Michigan, and are described as:
Parcel 1: Commencing on the East Line of Thomson Road 975 feet North and 33 feet East of the Southwest corner of the East 1/2 of the Southeast 1/4; thence East 298.61 feet; thence North 75 feet West 298.50 feet; thence South 75 feet to the beginning. Parcel 2: Commencing on the East line of Thomson Road 900 feet North and 33 feet East of the Southwest corner of the East 1/2 of the Southeast 1/4; thence East 628.52 feet; thence North 150 feet; thence West 329.80 feet; thence South 75 feet; thence West 298.61 feet; thence South 75 feet to beginning.
1235 Thomson Road, Niles, Michigan 49120.
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA §600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale.
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damage to the property during the redemption period.
Dated: October 4, 2025
File No. 25-012467
Firm Name: Orlans Law Group PLLC
Firm Address: 1650 West Big Beaver Road, Troy MI 48084
Firm Phone Number: (248) 502.1400
(10-04)(10-25)

White Space Sells

Synopsis of the Minutes of the Ontwa Township Board of Trustees Monday October 13, 2025
The regular meeting of the Ontwa Township Board of Trustees was called to order at 6:00pm.
Pledge of Allegiance
Roll Call
Approval of the Agenda
Public Comment
Approval of Consent Agenda
Commissioner's Report: Commissioner Marchetti
Committee Board Reports:
* Wastewater - Brigid Forlenza - none given
* Zoning Administrator Report - Dawn Bolock
* Ambulance - Trustee Stutsman
* Buildings & Grounds - Trustee Stutsman
* Planning Commission - Trustee Stutsman
* Township Roads - Trustee Kozinski
* Parks Board - Trustee Kozinski
* Police - Trustee Marchetti
* Adamsville Cemetery Board - Supervisor Christensen - none given
* Fire Board - Clerk VanBelle
Old Business: Elkhart Road Project
New Business: Update of 5 Years Parks and Recreation Plans, Appoint ZBA and Cemetery Board Members
Schedule of Township meetings: Next regular Township Board meeting will be November 10th, Ambulance Board November 12th, Police Board November 13th, Planning Commission Meeting November 5th, Wastewater Board Meeting November 26th. **Trick or Treat Hours 5:30-7:30pm**
Meeting Adjourned 6:38 pm Minutes of Board of Trustee meetings may be found on the Township website: www.ontwatwp.org
Respectfully submitted by Tina VanBelle, Ontwa Township Clerk
Approved for Publication by Supervisor Meryl Christensen

Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Cass County, starting promptly at 10:00 AM, on November 5, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information: Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Brittany Crane, an unmarried woman Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for lender and lender's successors and/or assigns Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Freedom Mortgage Corporation
Date of Mortgage: November 22, 2024
Date of Mortgage Recording: December 2, 2024
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $116,296.50
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Village of Cassopolis, Cass County, Michigan, and described as: Commencing on the Northeast corner of Lot Number 12, Block 3 South, Range 4 East, Altered Plat of the Village of Cassopolis, according to the recorded plat thereof, thence running South along the East line of said Lot Number 12, 3 1/2 rods; thence running West 6 rods, more or less, to the East line of property formerly owned by Henry Klinkman; thence running North on the East line of said Henry Klinkman's property to the North line of Lot Number 11 in said Block and Range; thence running East along the North line of said Lots Numbered 11 and 12 to the place of beginning.
Common street address (if any): 324 S East St, Cassopolis, MI 49031-1204
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16). If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: October 4, 2025
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
1572952 (248) 642-2515
(10-04)(10-25)

NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in CASS County, starting promptly at 10:00 AM, on November 19, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. MORTGAGE INFORMATION: Default has been made in the conditions of a certain mortgage made by William L. Smiley, a single person, whose address is 14260 M. 60 Highway, Jones, Michigan 49061, as original Mortgagors, to Wells Fargo Bank, N.A., being a mortgage dated February 8, 2010, and recorded on February 22, 2010 in Liber 1007 Page 22, Cass County Records, State of Michigan and then assigned to NewRez LLC d/b/a Shellpoint Mortgage Servicing, as assignee as documented by an assignment dated July 9, 2025 and recorded on July 9, 2025 in Liber 1262 Page 1415, Cass County Records, Michigan, on which mortgage there is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of THIRTY-ONE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED SEVENTY-ONE AND 59/100 DOLLARS ($31,571.59). Said premises are situated in the Township of Newberg, County of Cass, State of Michigan, and are described as: ALL THAT CERTAIN PARCEL OF LAND SITUATED IN TOWNSHIP OF NEWBERG, CASS COUNTY, STATE OF MICHIGAN, BEING KNOWN AND DESIGNATED AS FROM THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF SECTION 32, TOWN 6 SOUTH, RANGE 13 WEST, MEASURE SOUTH 89 DEGREES 52 MINUTES 58 SECONDS WEST ALONG THE NORTH LINE OF SAID SECTION 1211.50 FEET, THENCE MEASURE SOUTH 0 DEGREES 47 MINUTES 54 SECONDS EAST 937.74 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING OF THE LAND HEREIN DESCRIBED; THENCE CONTINUING SOUTH 0 DEGREES 47 MINUTES 54 SECONDS EAST 43.26 FEET; THENCE EAST 152.00 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 0 DEGREES 47 MINUTES 54 SECONDS EAST 253.43 FEET TO THE CENTER LINE OF STATE HIGHWAY M 60; THENCE NORTH 82 DEGREES 53 MINUTES 16 SECONDS WEST ALONG SAID CENTER LINE 376.92 FEET; THENCE NORTH 2 DEGREES 37 MINUTES 07 SECONDS EAST 184.14 FEET; THENCE NORTH 10 DEGREES 37 MINUTES 41 SECONDS EAST 38.94 FEET; THENCE NORTH 67 DEGREES 51 MINUTES 59 SECONDS EAST 72.96 FEET; THENCE NORTH 89 DEGREES 52 MINUTES 41 SECONDS EAST 134.71 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING. SUBJECT TO THAT PORTION ALONG THE SOUTHERLY SIDE THEREOF AS BEING USED FOR HIGHWAY PURPOSES. ALSO SUBJECT TO ANY EASEMENTS OR RESTRICTIONS OF RECORD. BY FEE SIMPLE DEED FROM TROTT & TROTT PC, AS ATTORNEY-IN-FACT FOR FEDERAL NATIONAL MORTGAGE ASSOCIATION. AS SET FORTH IN BOOK 985 PAGE 976 DATED 10/30/2008 AND RECORDED 11/04/2008, CASS COUNTY RECORDS. STATE OF MICHIGAN. Street Address: 14260 M. 60 Highway, Jones, Michigan 49061 The redemption period shall be 12 months from the date of such sale, unless the property is determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA § 600.3241a in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of the sale. If the property is sold at a foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCLA § 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. THIS FIRM IS A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION WE OBTAIN WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. ATTENTION HOMEOWNER: IF YOU ARE A MILITARY SERVICE MEMBER ON ACTIVE DUTY, IF YOUR PERIOD OF ACTIVE DUTY HAS CONCLUDED LESS THAN 90 DAYS AGO, OR IF YOU HAVE BEEN ORDERED TO ACTIVE DUTY, PLEASE CONTACT THE ATTORNEY FOR THE PARTY FORECLOSING THE MORTGAGE AT THE TELEPHONE NUMBER STATED IN THIS NOTICE. Dated: October 18, 2025, For more information, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing: Robert A. Blumberg (P87490), Johnson, Blumberg, & Associates, LLC, 30 North LaSalle St., Suite 3650 Chicago, Illinois, 60602. Telephone: (312) 541-9710 File No.: MI 25 6766

0900 LEGALS

NOTICE OF PUBLIC ACCURACY TEST SILVER CREEK TOWNSHIP, MICHIGAN

Notice of Public Accuracy Test of Voting Equipment
Important Message from the Silver Creek Clerk's Office:
To the qualified electors of the Silver Creek Township, Cass County, State of Michigan will be conducting a Public Accuracy Test for the electronic equipment that will be used to tabulate the votes in Precincts 1.
The Public Accuracy Test is conducted to demonstrate the computer programming used to tabulate the votes cast at the election meets the requirements of Michigan Election Law.
The meeting is being held on Tuesday October 28th, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. All members of the public are invited to participate.
For special accommodations, please call the Clerk's office at 269-424-3025x4 to make arrangements.

Jessica Honn
Silver Creek Township Clerk
269-424-3025 (ext. 4)
clerk@silvercreektwpmi.gov

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(269) 963-5588

101 Robinson St.
Dowagiac, MI 49047
(269) 782-5134

gunbroker@uslumbercompany.com

NOTICE OF ELECTION JEFFERSON, PENN & CALVINTOWNSHIPS, CASS COUNTY, MICHICAN NOVEMBER 4, 2025, SPECIAL ELECTION

TO THE QUALIFIED ELECTORS OF JEFFERSON, PENN & CALVIN TOWNSHIPS:

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A SPECIAL ELECTION WILL BE HELD IN JEFFERSON, PENN & CALVIN TOWNSHIPS ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2025. THE POLLS WILL BE OPEN FROM 7:00 AM TO 8:00 PM AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:

Jefferson Township Hall	Penn Township Hall	Calvin Township Hall
24725 Jefferson Center St	60717 S. Main St	18727 Mt Zion St
Cassopolis, MI 49031	Vandalia, MI 49095	Cassopolis, MI 49031

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE THAT the Jefferson, Penn & Calvin Township electors will be voting on the following ballot proposal:
MEDICAL CARE FACILITY
County of Cass Medical Care Facility Millage Renewal .4881mills for 10 years.

Full text of the ballot proposition may be obtained at the Cass County Clerk's Office, 120 N. Broadway, Cassopolis MI 49031; Telephone (269) 445-4464.

Full text of the ballot proposals may be obtained at the Jefferson, Penn & Calvin Township Clerks offices listed above. A sample ballot may be viewed at mi.gov/vote.

ABSENTEE BALLOTS ARE AVAILABLE FOR ALL ELECTIONS; REGISTERED VOTERS MAY CONTACT THE TOWNSHIP CLERK TO OBTAIN AN APPLICATION FOR AN ABSENT VOTER BALLOT BY CALLING THE TOWNSHIP OFFICES.

Jennifer Brunner	Rhonda Barnett	Michelle Anderson
Jefferson Twp Clerk	Penn Twp	Clerk Calvin Twp Clerk
(269) 445-3941	(269) 816-5165	(269) 476-2620

Looking for supplemental income?

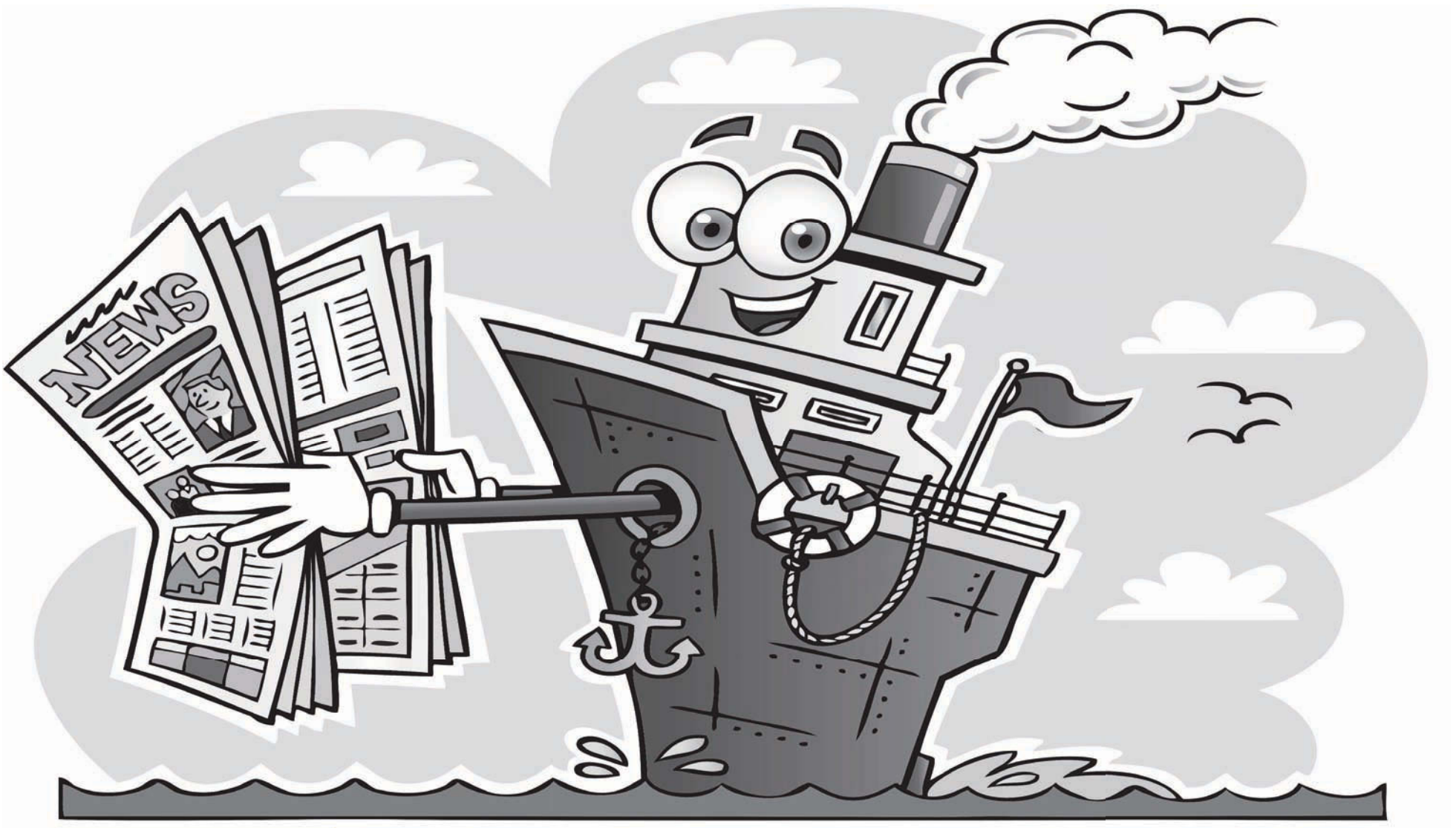
Leader Publications is looking for home delivery route carriers in the Dowagiac and Niles areas.
Please call 269-429-1877 for more information.

2026-2029 Tribal Transportation Improvement Program (TTIP)
The Pokagon Band has developed a draft Tribal Transportation Improvement Program (TTIP). The draft TTIP identifies and prioritizes transportation projects proposed for the next 4 years and provides planning level cost estimates for those projects.
Priorities are based upon the 2026 funding for the Tribal Transportation Program (TTP) as allocated by Congress and will change from year to year based upon a variety of factors.
Copies of the draft TTIP are available at the Pokagon Band Department of Housing & Community Development Offices, at 57824 Potawatomi Trail, Dowagiac, Michigan 49047, or by e-mailing a request for a copy to: Robert.Torzynski@PokagonBand-nsn.gov.
Questions regarding the draft Pokagon Band TTIP may be addressed to Pokagon Band Planning Manager, Robert Torzynski, at (269) 782-4896 or by email at the address provided above.
The public is entitled and encouraged to review the draft TTIP and respond in writing at the above provided e-mail address. Comments will be accepted until 5:00 p.m. Monday, November 10, 2025.
October 25, 2025

Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Cass County, starting promptly at 10:00 AM, on November 26, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Brandon L. Petersheim, married man
Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for lender and lender's successors and/or assigns
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Ruoff Mortgage Company, Inc.
Date of Mortgage: June 6, 2023
Date of Mortgage Recording: June 7, 2023
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $205,382.31
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Village of Cassopolis, Cass County, Michigan, and described as: Commencing at the East quarter post of Section 35, Town 6 South, Range 15 West; thence South 5 rods; thence West 18 rods; thence North 5 rods; thence East 18 rods to the place of beginning. EXCEPT the West 8 rods thereof.
Common street address (if any): 510 S O Keefe St, Cassopolis, MI 49031-1225
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16).
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: October 25, 2025
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1575157 (10-25)(11-15)

Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Cass County, starting promptly at 10:00 AM on NOVEMBER 12, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.
Default has been made in the conditions of a mortgage made by Anthony L. May, a man, to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for United Federal Credit Union, Mortgagee, dated December 13, 2021, and recorded December 27, 2021, in Liber 1209, Page 2006 Cass County Records, Michigan. Said mortgage is now held by Nationstar Mortgage LLC, by assignment. There is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of Two Hundred One Thousand Four Hundred Forty-Six and 13/100 Dollars ($201,446.13).
Under the power of sale contained in said mortgage and the statute in such case made and provided, notice is hereby given that said mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at public venue at the place of holding the circuit court within Cass County, Michigan at 10:00 AM on NOVEMBER 12, 2025.
Said premises are located in the Township of HOWARD, Cass County Michigan, and are described as:
Lot(s) 21 of YANKEE HEIGHTS according to the plat thereof recorded in Liber 1 of Plats, Page 153 of Cass County Records.
2560 Gilbert Avenue, Niles, Michigan 49120
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA §600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale.
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damage to the property during the redemption period.
Dated: October 11, 2025
File No. 25-006597
Firm Name: Orlans Law Group PLLC
Firm Address: 1650 West Big Beaver Road, Troy MI 48084
Firm Phone Number: (248) 502.1400
(10-11)(11-01)

SHORT FORECLOSURE NOTICE - CASS COUNTY Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Cass County, starting promptly at 10:00 AM, on November 26, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. MORTGAGE: Mortgagor(s): Nicholas Walker, an unmarried man Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. ("MERS"), solely as nominee for lender and lender`s successors and assigns Date of mortgage: October 2, 2012 Recorded on October 4, 2012, Liber 1048, on Page 798, Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Rocket Mortgage, LLC f/k/a Quicken Loans, LLC f/k/a Quicken Loans Inc. Amount claimed to be due at the date hereof: Forty Thousand One Hundred Thirty-Two and 27/100 Dollars ($40,132.27) Mortgaged premises: Situated in Cass County, and described as: Lot Numbered Eighty-three (83) in McOmber`s Second Addition to the City of Dowagiac, according to the Plat thereof as recorded in Liber V of Deeds, page 15, Cass County Records. Commonly known as 309 McOmber St, Dowagiac, MI 49047 The redemption period will be 6 month from the date of such sale, unless abandoned under MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period will be 30 days from the date of such sale, or 15 days from the MCL 600.3241a(b) notice, whichever is later; or unless extinguished pursuant to MCL 600.3238. If the above referenced property is sold at a foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of Act 236 of 1961, under MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. Rocket Mortgage, LLC f/k/a Quicken Loans, LLC f/k/a Quicken Loans Inc. Mortgagee/Assignee Schneiderman & Sherman P.C. 23938 Research Dr, Suite 300 Farmington Hills, MI 48335 248.539.7400 1575525 (10-25)(11-15)



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OUTDOORS

Photos by Ryan Yuenger / HP correspondent

Lake Michigan waves crash over the north pier lighthouse in St. Joseph.

Pier Pressure | The gales of November came early this year on Lake Michigan

Ryan Yuenger

Living on Lake Michigan has a funny way of humbling me.

After taking a long, relaxing fall hike at Grand Mere State Park last week, I was prepared to write a deep, reflective piece on how visiting my favorite spot in southwest Michigan is a soothing tonic to my nature-loving soul.

Temperatures hovered around 65 degrees all day with no wind and calm water, complete with a golden sunset that seemed to last hours as I frolicked through the dunegrass and watched the leaves change colors.

Then, the Gales of November came early.

I woke up Sunday morning to find a large black walnut tree had crashed down on my backyard fence overnight, causing significant damage and throwing a wrench in my plans for a peaceful day of writing.

With winds still gusting at 40 MPH, I figured it would be best to wait before trying to clear the heavy, tangled mess of wet wood and vines from around my fence.

At this point, all the tender thoughts from my Grand Mere hike were long gone, so I headed down to the beach and see what kind of carnage Lake Michigan was whipping up.

Indeed, waves of nearly 15 feet were repeatedly battering the lighthouse like fried chicken dinner. Swells of water surged over the sides of both piers up the St. Joseph River as swaths of sand swept across Silver Beach.

Kiteboarders were already in the water despite the steady rain, and beachgoers were flocking onto the pier, despite signs that say "Danger. Waves Flood Surface. Keep Off During Storms."

A friendly older lady tried to warn people not to go out on the pier, but her warnings went largely ignored – including by a mother and her two young children. Across the river on the north pier, people holding babies stood next to a sign featuring images of people who have died recently on Lake Michigan.

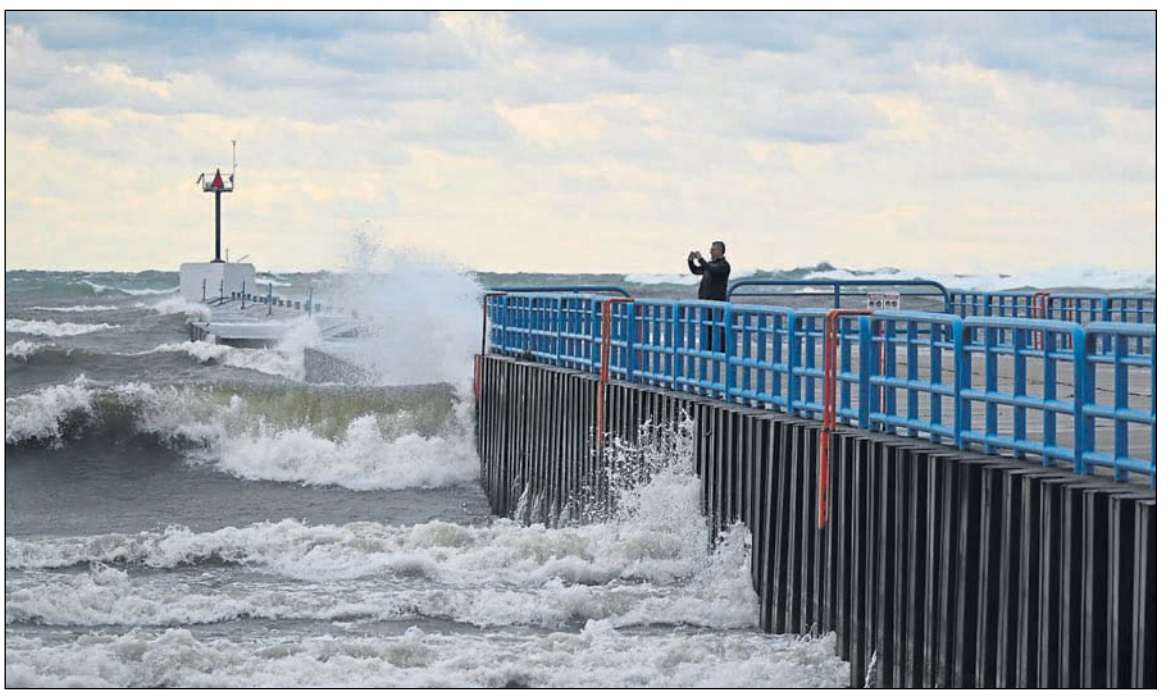
It was the worst kind of irony. If I didn't have photo evidence, I would not have believed the blatant disregard for safety.

As someone who walks out on the pier on a near-daily basis, I do not play games when water is crashing over the sides of the pier, let alone fully engulfing the lighthouse. I've lived here long enough to see firsthand the aftermath of someone getting swept off the pier.

Every year, Lake Michigan claims lives of many who underestimate its power. I find it truly unbelievable that people – especially those with small children – are willing to risk their safety to behold the beautiful power of water from up close.

Lake Michigan is not an amusement park, and it must be respected. All it takes is one rogue wave to sweep you off your feet. Even if you're saved from washing into the water by the safety rails, you don't want to fall onto the concrete pier. Trust me, the water looks just as cool from the beach.

Don't give in to pier pressure, folks.



A man takes a photo as waves crash over the pier.

Despite warnings and extreme conditions, people continued to walk out on the pier.

Sunset

I took a break from getting blasted in the face by 40 MPH sand pellets to go charge my camera battery and clear some tree debris from my backyard.

After a couple hours of sawing, hacking and dragging tree limbs, I noticed the sun start to peek out from behind the clouds, so I headed back down to the beach with my camera.

The kiteboarders looked like they finally had enough, as winds continued to whip and waves smothered the lighthouse like some extra gravy on the twice-fried chicken from before.

A view of my fence, damaged by a large black walnut branch during this weekend's storms.

Maybe it was the smell of Silver Beach Pizza in the distance, but I was getting hungry. The golden hour set the entire scene aglow, and more beachgoers congregated on the wet pier, mesmerized by the sheer power and beauty of our freshwater lake.

As the sun set below the horizon, it felt like was like something out of a dream. A recurring dream I get to live in every day living on the southwest Michigan shore. A dream I hope I never wake from.

Ryan Yuenger is an HP correspondent. Send him ideas of where to take a hike or have his next outdoor adventure at ryuenger@thehp.com.

Sarett Nature Center

Sarett Nature Stewards: 2-4 p.m. each Wednesday. This program is a way to experience Sarett in a whole different way. By being a nature steward you are helping Sarett but you also gain a sense of well-being. Sarett's crew will teach you many different skills such as collecting viable seeds for future planting, how to identify invasive species from native ones, removing invasive plants, and more. For ages 10 and older.

Sarett's Spooky Halloween: 3-8 p.m. Oct. 25. A spooky adventure will be had by all ages as you take a stroll through the trails and visit some spooky crafts, game stations, and other fun activities. Visit the scary trail if you want a fright. Tickets should be purchased in advance to participate in this Halloween event. Cost is $6 per person age 2 or older. Tickets can be purchased at Sarett's online store at https://sarett-nature-center.square.site/halloween-tickets.

Email info for Get Outdoors to sports@TheHP.com, or call 429-1294 by Wednesday.

50-year mystery of ancient 'subway deer' discovered in Canada is now solved

By LAUREN LIEBHABER
Miami Herald (TNS)

In 1976, during the excavation of a subway extension in Toronto, a city worker discovered unusual looking antlers with "thick, horizontal beams."

Experts named it Torontoceros hypogaeus, meaning " horned Toronto deer from underground," but over time it became known as "The Toronto subway deer," according to an Oct. 10 news release from the university.

For nearly 50 years, the identity and lineage of the species has been a mystery – until now.

Researchers collected DNA from about two dozen ancient cervid samples, including "deer, elk, moose, and caribou" ancestors, and compared those to the mystery antlers.

They found no match to any known species, however, according to the release.

Thanks to advances in DNA analysis, researchers from Trent University have now determined the antlers belonged to a now-extinct species, closely related to mule deer and white-tailed deer, experts said.

"Think of it as their grandparent," Dr. Aaron Shafer, chair of Forensic Science at Trent University, said in the release.

Experts said "the discovery fits within the broader picture of a megafaunal extinction event about 12,000 years ago, when many large mammals failed to adapt to rapid climate change."

Submitting hunting or fishing photos

Have a behemoth buck, a tremendous turkey or super-sized salmon?

Please submit photos to sports@TheHP.com.

Your photo must be in focus, all persons in the photo must be identified, and the general location of the hunt must be provided (for example, 10-point buck shot in Benton Township, black bear shot near Munising, Mich., etc.)

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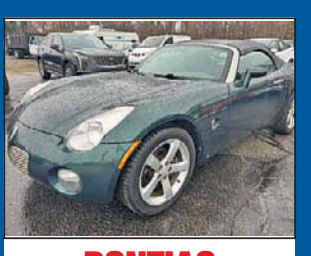

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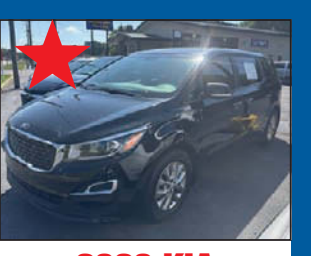

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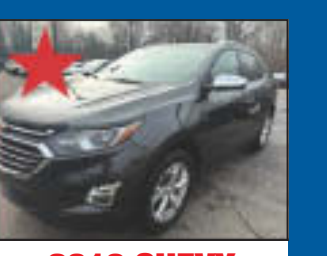

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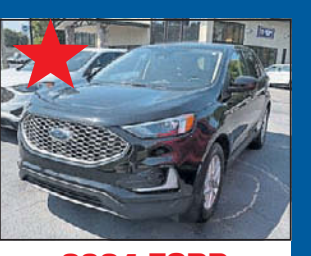

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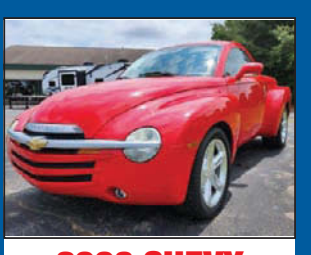

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